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THE

MOSAIC DISPENSATION

CONSIDERED AS INTRODUCTORY TO

CHRISTIANITY.

EIGHT SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

AT THE

BAMPTON LECTURE

FOR THE YEAR MDCCCLVI.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD ARTHUR LITTON, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE.

Novum Testamentum in vetere velabatur: vetus Testamentum in novo revelatur. *Augustin. Serm.* clx.

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TO THE

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IN THE

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THE

FOLLOWING SERMONS

PREACHED BY THEIR APPOINTMENT

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EXTRACT

FROM

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN BAMPTON,

CANON OF SALISBURY.

——"I give and bequeath my Lands and Estates to "the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University "of Oxford for ever, to have and to hold all and singular "the said Lands or Estates upon trust, and to the intents "and purposes hereinafter mentioned; that is to say, "I will and appoint, that the Vice-Chancellor of the "University of Oxford for the time being shall take "and receive all the rents, issues, and profits thereof, "and (after all taxes, reparations, and necessary deductions "made) that he pay all the remainder to the endowment "of Eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be established "for ever in the said University, and to be performed "in the manner following:

"I direct and appoint, that, upon the first Tuesday "in Easter Term, a Lecturer be yearly chosen by the "Heads of Colleges only, and by no others, in the room "adjoining to the Printing-House, between the hours "of ten in the morning and two in the afternoon, to "preach Eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year fol-"lowing, at St. Mary's in Oxford, between the com-"mencement of the last month in Lent Term, and the "end of the third week in Act Term.

"Also I direct and appoint, that the Eight Divinity "Lecture Sermons shall be preached upon either of "the following Subjects—to confirm and establish the "Christian Faith, and to confute all heretics and schis- "matics—upon the divine authority of the Holy Scrip- "tures—upon the authority of the writings of the "primitive Fathers, as to the faith and practice of the "primitive Church—upon the Divinity of our Lord and "Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the Divinity of the Holy "Ghost—upon the Articles of the Christian Faith, as "comprehended in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

"Also I direct, that thirty copies of the Eight Divinity "Lecture Sermons shall be always printed within two "months after they are preached, and one copy shall be "given to the Chancellor of the University, and one copy "to the Head of every College, and one copy to the "Mayor of the City of Oxford, and one copy to be put "into the Bodleian Library; and the expense of printing "them shall be paid out of the revenue of the Land or "Estates given for establishing the Divinity Lecture "Sermons; and the Preacher shall not be paid, nor be "entitled to the revenue, before they are printed.

"Also I direct and appoint, that no person shall be "qualified to preach the Divinity Lecture Sermons, "unless he hath taken the Degree of Master of Arts at "least, in one of the two Universities of Oxford or "Cambridge; and that the same person shall never "preach the Divinity Lecture Sermons twice."

PREFACE.

While the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration, of the Jewish Scriptures have been frequently and successfully vindicated, there is reason to apprehend that the structure of the Mosaic economy itself, and its relation to the Christian, have not received from our divines an equal measure of attention; the consequence of which has been, a comparative neglect, on the part of students in theology, of this portion of the sacred volume, as containing little to interest or instruct.

We have, indeed, scattered observations and hints in the works of well-known writers, but, as far as the author is aware, no connected view of the whole subject. It seems to have been part of Warburton's plan to exhibit the connexion of the two covenants; but he has left a fragment only, and that of no great value, on this subject: and perhaps the loss is not so great, for from his general views on religion, as displayed in his other works, and from the constitution of his mind, this great writer might not have been so successful in unfolding the "Nature and Genius of the Christian Religion[a]," as he is in establishing the divine legation

[a] The title of Warburton's ninth book.

of Moses. In Dr. Graves' useful work on the Pentateuch, 'Judaism as preparatory to Christianity' occupies but a single lecture. Archbishop Magee's learned Dissertations relate chiefly to one topic. Many valuable remarks occur in different parts of Mr. Davison's works; so valuable, that it is a matter of regret that this gifted writer was not led to traverse the whole field: but on several points not inferior in interest to those of which he treats in his Discourses on Prophecy, and in his treatise on Sacrifice, he has delivered no judgment. Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, and Dr. Fairbairn's excellent work on Typology, confine themselves chiefly to the typical branch of the subject.

In the following pages an attempt is made to supply this defect; and to present such a view of the nature and use of the Mosaic system as introductory to the Gospel, as shall, at least, draw attention to a rich, but uncultivated, region of religious inquiry. The writer is aware that omissions and imperfections will probably be found in his work: the homiletic form, with its necessarily contracted limits, is not the most favourable to theological discussion. He is willing however to hope, that most of the leading points in which Judaism prepared the way for Christianity have been noticed; and especially those with which, in the minds of intelligent students, peculiar difficulties may be supposed to be connected. Elucidations of some of these points, which could not

be well introduced into the Lectures, he has thrown into an Appendix.

In his choice of a subject, the writer has been influenced not merely by the interest with which, to the devout Christian, the elder dispensation must ever be invested, but by a conviction, shared, he believes, by many, that theological controversy amongst ourselves is taking a new turn, and that such topics as the supernatural character of Revealed Religion in general, and the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures in particular, may be expected to occupy no small share of public attention. In the rationalistic movements of the Continent it is the Old Testament against which the first attacks have commonly been directed: both in this country and abroad, avowed infidelity has ever expatiated with peculiar zest on the supposed defects of the Mosaic system. That we may, before long, have to meet a sceptical criticism of this kind, is by no means unlikely. The writer has, in the prosecution of his task, indulged the hope, that the remarks made on the ethical tendency, and prophetical character, of the ancient economy, may, under the Divine blessing, contribute to the conviction of its having been, not the product of human wisdom, but the appointment of God.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

LECTURE I.

GALATIANS iii. 19.

Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.

THAT the Old Testament, so far from being contrary to the New, as some ancient heretics held, was designed to be a preparatory revelation, containing at the least a dim outline of the more perfect one that was to come, may be assumed as admitted by most of those who profess and call themselves Christians. Less than this indeed can hardly be maintained by those, who believe that both parts of the Canon proceeded from the same Divine Author, and come under the same category of inspiration; and who remember, that by Christ and His Apostles the writings of the old dispensation are constantly referred to, as furnishing testimony of various character, by allegory, by type, and by prophecy, to the facts and doctrines of the Gospel. Whatever differences may exist in the principles on which the economies

of Moses and of Christ were respectively constructed, or in the mode of instruction peculiar to each; whatever positive imperfections may have belonged to the earlier revelation as compared with the later; to whatever extent the temporary and provisional appointments of the one may have been superseded by the other; there must be a connexion, an essential harmony, between them, for they both testify of Christ, the scope, and central object, of all God's communications to fallen man. We may distinguish here, but we cannot separate; for the whole range of revelation is knit together, and made substantially one, by the unity of the keystone, upon which all depends, to which all, more or less directly, refers.

But while we may reckon upon an assent to these statements thus generally propounded, when we come to examine more minutely the views which have been taken by individual Christians, or by sections of the Christian body, of the relation of the Old Testament to the New, we find great diversity prevailing. By the heretics of ancient times already alluded to, the divine origin of the Old Testament was openly denied, its author being supposed to be a secondary evil principle or deity, by whom the world was created, and who was in perpetual warfare with the self-existent and eternal fountain of good[a]. Proceeding from such a source, the Jewish system

[a] See Faber, Hor. Mos. ii. §. 1.

was essentially evil; its ordinances were carnal and debasing; its morality defective; and the mission of Christ, in reference to the Law and the Prophets, was not to fulfil, but to destroy. The necessary consequence of these tenets was, a complete severance of the Jewish from the Christian Scriptures, as if the two, instead of being supplementary, were irreconcileably opposed, the one to the other. An error of exactly an opposite character prevailed amongst the first Jewish converts to Christianity. Unable to conceive how a system, which had been accredited by stupendous miracles, and with which their existence as a separate nation and their most hallowed associations were bound up, could ever outlive its purposes in the economy of redemption, and become needless, they insisted on the continued obligation of the law of Moses on Christians, not only of Jewish but of Gentile origin; so that submission to the rite of circumcision, not less than faith in Christ, became in their eyes essential to salvation. It required all the authority of the great Apostle of the Gentiles to arrest the progress of these erroneous views, which, had they become dominant in the Church, would not only have corrupted Christianity to its core, but rendered its diffusion throughout the world impossible. The struggle was severe and protracted; even Apostles found it difficult to overcome their Jewish prejudices, and enter into the universal spirit of Christianity; but

at length the question was decided against the zealots of the Law, and the Jewish element either separated itself from the Church, or lay apparently extinct until circumstances revived it under another form. It is seldom that Divine Providence fails in eliciting good from evil, and to this great controversy we owe the luminous expositions of the relation of the Law to the Gospel which abound in St. Paul's Epistles, and especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and to which, in our discussions on this subject, we must ever refer as furnishing the great landmarks by which our course is to be guided.

Between the two extremes, thus briefly alluded to, opinion has fluctuated in the Church, according as a higher or a lower view has been taken of the nature and objects of the Old Testament institutions, and the differences between the two dispensations have been either exaggerated or understated. Some, like Spencer and his followers, have been unable to see any thing in the Mosaic appointments but an imitation of heathen, especially Egyptian, religious rites, by the adoption of which, shorn of their impure and idolatrous accompaniments, the Israelites, who were incapable of a more spiritual worship, were to be retained in their allegiance to their Divine King, and acquiesce the more contentedly in the prohibitions of their law against the admixture of foreign elements of worship[b]. According

[b] See Spencer's work, De Leg. Heb. passim.

to this view, the main, if not the sole, object of the Mosaic system was the prevention of idolatry; its symbolical and typical import being proportionably disregarded. Spencer's theory, as might be expected, has been taken up and carried further by the rationalistic writers of Germany and their followers in this country; by no means more effectually than by robbing the Old Testament of its Christianity, could Christianity itself, as exhibited in the New, be despoiled of its distinctive doctrines. The opponents of Spencer's school, who number among them many eminent names, have perhaps, in their well-meant endeavours to rescue the elder revelation from the inferior place assigned to it, been tempted to invest it with characters of perfection which do not properly belong to it[c]. Not content with proving, that the Jewish system was so constructed as not merely to inculcate the unity and spirituality of the Divine Being, but to prefigure the great truths of the Gospel, they have insisted, that under the Law these truths were as clearly taught, and as clearly understood, as they are under our dispensation; so that if the writings of the Apostles and their fellow-helpers had perished, we should still be able to construct

[c] See especially Witsius on the Covenants, b. iv. c. 11, 12. The Calvinistic writers generally betray an inclination to exaggerate the perfection of the law as a religious system. Calvin himself is not exempt from this tendency. See his Institutes, l. ii. c. 10.

from those of Moses and the Prophets a complete system of Christian doctrine. To maintain this theory, they were compelled to have recourse to arbitrary and unnatural interpretations, and especially to a system of typology, which luxuriates in an unbounded license, and by finding Christ every where furnished a pretext to minds indisposed towards divine truth for finding Him no where[d]. Besides these discrepancies of opinion on the part of theologians, tendencies in the one direction or the other are observable in parties within Churches, and even in Churches themselves. Thus our English Puritans, as is well known, exhibited a disposition to model the Gospel, in more points than one, after the Law; and so, though on different grounds, do those of our day who incline to the literal school of prophecy, and entertain strong pre-millennarian views. The Church of Rome betrays a tendency to understate, the Protestant Churches a tendency to enhance, the distinction between the Law and the Gospel. To enter more fully into these varieties of teaching would here be out of place; one general remark is applicable to them, that in most cases they are the result, not of impartial inquiry into the subject-matter itself, but of dogmatical prepossessions, and theories to be

[d] For an account of the school of typology alluded to, and its founder Cocceius, see Fairbairn, Typology of Scripture, i. c. 1.

defended, which do not appear on the surface. Thus the Puritan found in the history of the chosen people, and the lives of many of its leading statesmen and warriors, matter on which to nourish his stern impatience of what he conceived to be idolatry in religion and tyranny in government; and the preference with which he was thus led to regard the Jewish Scriptures extended its influence over his theology, producing what may, without intending any thing derogatory to the great and pious men to whom we owe so much, be called a Puritanical version of the Gospel. The interest which the Church of Rome has in diminishing, as far as may be, the differences between the Mosaic and the Christian systems is obvious; thus does she gain an argument for the sacrifice of the Mass, for a human priesthood, and for the general substitution of the letter for the spirit which pervades her system. Among Protestants, the reaction against these erroneous tenets has been one main cause of their distinguishing so strongly between the two systems. Thus has the relation of the Mosaic to the Christian dispensation been variously viewed, according to the previously existing bias of the inquirer; and hence has arisen not only the discrepancies of judgment which meet us on this subject, but the difficulty of bringing the opposite parties to a common understanding.

To endeavour, amidst these contending views

which perplex us with their number and their contrariety, to arrive at some definite notions respecting the Mosaic economy, its structure, its use, and the place it holds in the course of revelation, is the object of the present Lectures. On a subject on which so much has been written originality cannot be expected, and the real difficulties which surround it forbid a dogmatical spirit; I shall be satisfied if in any instance I shall be enabled, from a consideration of the points of contrast, and of agreement, between the two economies, to promote just views respecting each, and so to lend some assistance to my younger brethren, whose interests must ever be uppermost in our thoughts, in their study of the word of God. Perhaps I may be permitted to observe that, as well from the circumstances of the times as from their intrinsic interest, subjects of this kind peculiarly merit our attention. Observant minds are beginning to fear that the tide of theological opinion, after having, particularly in this place, for a number of years set strongly in a particular direction, is about to retrace its course, and in so doing runs imminent danger of retiring to such a distance, as to leave many a bark, which once rode in safety, stranded on the beach. Reactions of this kind are inevitable, perhaps are necessary, in this imperfect state of being. The characteristics of the coming change seem sufficiently obvious: an indifference to Christian truth

as truth, which sometimes veils itself under a professed sympathy with all schools of opinion to a certain extent; a spirit of eclecticism, which calmly, and as if from the point of view of an unconcerned spectator, analyses theological systems, and culls from each what is most congenial to its taste; a tendency towards Pelagian views of the powers of unassisted human nature, especially in social combinations; the transformation of the individual, personal, religion of the Bible, into a Christianity of the race, the world not the church being made the sphere of Christ's saving power; and, as a practical feature, a fastidious and unhealthy dread of the imputation of party spirit, which paralyses Christian zeal and activity; such are some of the features of the speculative religionism which seems not unlikely to gain a footing amongst us. That this cast of sentiment should leave Scripture itself unassailed, is not to be expected; and in fact, views have been put forward respecting the inspiration, and the contents, of the sacred volume, which make it no longer, as we believe it was intended to be, a lamp to our feet amidst the darkness that surrounds us. What we understand by inspiration, as applied to the Scriptures, is robbed of its significance, by making the term equally comprehend the surmises of philosophers and the fancies of the poet; and it is more than insinuated, that certain portions even of the New Testament, as, for example, the contro-

versial parts of St. Paul's Epistles, having had their day and served their purpose, are to be consigned to an honourable repose, and Christianity is to come forth under its final aspect as the religion of universal love. In what light the Old Testament is likely to be regarded, under the influence of such views, may be easily surmised; in fact, the note of preparation for an attack on this portion of God's word has already sounded, and the soldiers of the cross, especially those who from their office are placed in the van of the conflict, must look to their armour, offensive and defensive, and take up their position. Should the danger be happily averted, this result will, we cannot doubt, be, under God, owing to the increase among us of a devout and intelligent study of Scripture, which thus only comes to be *felt* to be the word of God, profitable, in every part of it, for correction and instruction in righteousness. For in truth the original aberration, from which the type of sentiment just described is a reaction, sprang from abandoning the guidance of Scripture for theories of human origin; from attempting to supply what is obscure, or is left undetermined, in the written word by an unwritten rule of faith, or a system of infallible interpretation; and from exalting the Creeds, or the voice of the Church, so far as it can be ascertained, to an equality with the declarations of Prophets and Apostles. It is not often that they who have suffered themselves to be seduced by these theories which promise so

fair, but on trial prove so illusory, succeed in retracing their steps to the solid ground of Scriptural Christianity; the necessity becomes felt, and the more strongly in proportion to the earnestness and logical acumen of the inquirer, either of wholly drawing back or of advancing further; and the too probable result, therefore, is either an acquiescence in a state of chronic, though perhaps not avowed, scepticism, or a submission to the claims of a pretended infallible authority, which puts an end to doubt by stifling all inquiry. Our best safeguard against either danger is a recurrence to the written word, and a full confidence in it as our only safe guide; there we stand on solid ground; there we hold converse with truth as it issued directly from its Divine Author; there we see enough revealed to satisfy every real want of man, and enough partially, or wholly, hidden to rebuke a spirit of dogmatism, or of presumptuous curiosity. Studies therefore which have for their object the elucidation of Scripture, in any of its leading divisions, seem to be, under present circumstances, peculiarly appropriate. We have listened long enough to the voice of Christian antiquity, and the result has been of various character, corresponding to the mixture of truth and error which it presents; let us give some portion, at least, of our attention to the primary source of divine truth, the only authentic record of what Moses and the Prophets prefigured or

foretold, and of what the Apostles taught; and not suffer the Bible to be superseded by its human commentators.

But independently of these considerations, there is reason to apprehend that many Christians fail, through mere inattention, of deriving from the Old Testament Scriptures the instruction and edification which they were intended to furnish. The interesting narratives indeed with which they abound, supplying as they do the best materials for impressing on the mind of childhood the lessons of religion, become identified with our earliest associations, and never lose their charm; but the Law, civil and ceremonial, the historical Scriptures, and even the volume of prophecy, remain comparatively unstudied, because their bearing on the interpretation of the New Testament, and on the furtherance of piety, is but imperfectly apprehended. Perhaps one of the most striking practical proofs of the comparative neglect to which this department of sacred learning has been consigned is the general want of acquaintance, even on the part of those who are to stand forth as teachers of religion, with the original language of the Old Testament. Yet it is surely no insignificant circumstance, that so large a portion of the entire volume of inspiration should be occupied by the Jewish Scriptures. On these Scriptures it is that St. Paul builds his most cogent arguments against unbelievers; by these, with the light which the

Gospel throws on them, a Timothy could be made wise unto salvation[e]. Ill qualified indeed must that minister of the Gospel be for his office, who is a stranger to this field of biblical research. For if it is true, as it is, that we Christians possess in our Scriptures the key to the Old Testament, which, apart from this inspired commentary, were a system of cyphers without the interpretation; it is no less true, that when once we have fixed, by the aid of the New Testament, the true import of the Law and of the Prophets, the latter will be found, in their turn, to throw a flood of light on the great truths of the Gospel. The statue, to adopt the image of an eminent divine[f], with its cords wrought within, may be mute till the sun strikes upon them; but when the animating ray calls forth the hidden harmony, it will be perceived to be both sweet and various. I need not remind you how largely the writers of the New Testament transfer the terms of the Old to Christian purposes, and how impossible it is rightly to understand their language without a reference to its Jewish source. Moreover, it is a mistake to suppose that the symbolical system of the old dispensation has, not only given place to the realities of the new, but wholly lost its utility. With all our advantages over the Jew, especially in the earlier period of his history, we are not

[e] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

[f] Davison, Discourses on Prophecy, p. 143.

above being instructed as he was by emblem and figure; our own Sacraments partake of a symbolical character; and the eyes which are too weak, as may sometimes be the case, to gaze directly at the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, may profitably study the elements of the Gospel under the typical history of the chosen people, and the veil of the ceremonial law. Indeed in some instances the symbol, when interpreted, will be found to speak more fully, if not more distinctly, than the interpretation itself. Take, for example, the great doctrine of the Atonement. He who after having perused what the New Testament teaches concerning Christ's atoning work, turns to the corresponding symbolical representations of the Old in the book of Leviticus, will, if I mistake not, not only find his mind more vividly impressed than it was before with the importance of this doctrine, but discover more clearly the radical ideas on which it is based, and which seem to be more barely exposed in the symbol, more indirectly conveyed in the explanation. As an instance, I might mention the principle of vicarious suffering. Let not then the Old Testament be regarded as a dead letter; it may be made to us who can unlock its hidden treasures a source of most valuable instruction. And even if this were not the case, even if the Mosaic institutions were nothing to us but an obsolete system, still as a relic, a memorial, which

once enveloped Christian ideas, it can never lose its interest. The Saviour has indeed come forth from the obscurity of typical symbols; the carnal ordinances, which were only "imposed until the time of reformation," have fallen away on every side, in order to permit the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father to appear the more distinctly; still even the linen clothes and the napkin, which once encircled His Person, become objects of sacred interest, and to Christians the invitation will never be addressed in vain, "Come, and see the place where the Lord lay."

But I am detaining you too long with these preliminary observations; suffice it to observe, that to the pious mind no satisfaction can be greater than to trace the successive steps by which preparation was made for the Saviour's appearance; to observe how each appointment was exactly adapted to the purposes it was to serve; and to mark the substantial unity which, under every difference of form or accident, pervades both dispensations, making them but parts of one comprehensive scheme for the recovery of fallen man. Discoveries of this kind, indicating as they do the existence of a presiding Intelligence which sees the issues of things from the beginning, often produce a stronger conviction of the divine origin of the Scriptures, than the so-called external evidences, indispensable as the latter are in their place.

The Mosaic dispensation may be regarded as introductory to the Christian under a twofold aspect, according as the institutions and the external revelation on the one hand, or the dispositions it was intended to produce in those placed under it, on the other, form the subject of consideration. This division will determine the principal topics to which I shall have to direct your attention. I propose then, in the first place, to examine the structure of the Jewish Theocracy in general, as a political and religious institution; after which the Levitical appointments, particularly those of priesthood and sacrifice, with their corresponding facts under the Gospel, will claim our attention. The prophetical connexion between the two covenants, including some remarks on the subject-matter and course of prophecy regarded as introductory to the Gospel, will follow. Passing to the subjective view of the subject, we shall have to inquire into the effect produced on the pious part of the nation by the discipline under which it was placed; a topic which will naturally involve the inquiry, to what extent spiritual influences were vouchsafed under the Law. As an institution, not indeed immediately belonging to the Law, but still of too much importance to be passed over in a course of Lectures like the present, the synagogue, in its relation to the temple worship, will deserve our notice. Finally, I shall have to offer some re-

marks on the erroneous notions that have prevailed, from time to time, in the Church, respecting the relation of the Law to the Gospel.

It will not of course be expected, that the several topics just mentioned should be handled under every aspect of which they admit, or in detail; for formal introductions to the Old Testament, I refer my hearers to the many valuable works that have been published on this subject both at home and abroad[g]; my aim has been, the authenticity and inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures being assumed, to select certain interesting points for discussion, interesting either from their intrinsic importance, or th eir intrinsic difficulty; or from their not having received so much attention as some others; or from the light which they throw upon the nature of the Christian dispensation: and this with the twofold object in view; of vindicating the Mosaic economy from the objections that have been urged against it, and ascertaining in what respects, and how far, it prepared the way for the Gospel.

In what remains of this, and in the following Lecture, I shall attempt to explain the fundamental principles on which the Theocracy, as a whole, was constructed.

[g] Such as Graves on the Pentateuch, Gray's Key, Horne's Introduction, vol. i. The best modern German works on the subject are Hävernick's Einleitung, and Theologie der A.T. translated, I believe, in Clark's Theological Library; and Kurtz's Geschichte des Alten Bundes, not completed.

Why more than 4000 years were permitted to elapse between the first intimation to fallen man of a future Saviour, and the actual fulfilment of the promise, must ever remain a mystery unfathomable by human reason. Meanwhile we may be sure, that the advent of the Messiah was delayed no longer than was necessary; and one at least of the reasons of the delay we may surmise to have been, the necessity of a previous process of preparation, to fit the world for the reception of the Gospel. Though we have no reason to suppose that the full effects of the fall were at first manifest, the sacred history as well as uninspired traditions leading us to suppose, that the seed of evil gradually developed itself; yet once commenced the descent was rapid, and the wickedness of man became so great that it needed a universal and sweeping destruction to purge the earth. Restored in the person of Noah and his family, and placed under a covenant of natural mercies, the human race again commenced its downward course; the knowledge of the true God became lost, or obscured, by the adjuncts of superstition; and no standard of right and wrong presenting itself, save the imperfect "work of the law written" on the natural heart, men became not only fearfully depraved, but, with few exceptions, unconscious of their fallen state, and therefore indifferent to the means of recovery from it. Had the Saviour appeared in the world at

this stage of its moral progress, He would have found it unprepared for the reception of the truths which centre in His person and work. Hence the course pursued by the Divine Wisdom was to lead our race through a gradual course of preparatory training, by means of which the most influential portions of it, at least, might be fitted to embrace the Gospel, whenever it should please its Divine Author to propound it to their acceptance.

As regards the heathen world, this process of preparation was merely negative. The heathens were left to themselves, in order that by actual experience, they might become convinced of man's inability to restore the interrupted fellowship between himself and God. A conviction of human weakness, and of the folly of the popular systems of idolatry, together with a general craving amongst earnest inquirers for some unquestionably divine revelation to remove the obscurity which hung over their present condition and future prospects; this was the amount of illumination, if it may be so called, vouchsafed to the pagan world. Enlightened heathens, at the first advent of Christ, were prepared to receive Christianity, simply because every school of philosophy, and every mythical system, had confessed its insufficiency to meet the spiritual wants of man. But it is obvious, that something more than this was necessary to secure a footing for the Gospel, whenever

it should be promulgated. There needed to exist somewhere a positive groundwork of religious knowledge, with which Christianity might connect itself; an outline of which Christianity should be the filling up. Especially was it desirable, that such a foundation and such an outline should exist in the particular locality in which the promised Saviour was to be born, and where His earthly pilgrimage was to run its course: such a favoured spot would form a centre, whence the rays of divine light might be disseminated throughout the world. This special and positive preparation for the Gospel was effected by an immediate exercise of Divine power. One people, while yet in the loins of its progenitor Abraham, was selected to be the repository of such revelations concerning Himself and His designs, as it should please God to communicate; and, at a period when probably idolatry was universal, this progenitor of the chosen people was separated from his country and kindred, and, with his posterity, made the subject of a special covenant. In due time, when the descendants of the Patriarch had become sufficiently numerous to form a nation, they were led forth from their place of temporary sojourn, and put in possession of the land promised to their fathers; receiving, at the same time, through the mediation of Moses, that code of law, civil, moral, and ceremonial, under which they continued to exist until the destruction of the temple. It was

amongst this people, placed thus under a peculiar economy, that Christ, when He came, was to find existing such a measure of religious knowledge, and such elements of religious feeling, as should make the transition from Judaism to Christianity easy and natural.

What were the prominent characteristics of the national and religious polity thus erected amidst the barren wastes of Sinai? The first peculiar feature that strikes the observer, is the form of government adopted, which was a pure Theocracy; the only instance of such a polity which the history of the world presents. The specific difference between the Mosaic law, regarded as a national constitution, and every other that is known to have existed, consists not in its religious character taken by itself, nor again in any peculiarity of its civil enactments, remarkable as some of these were, but in the complete fusion which it presented of civil and religious government. The system under which the Jews was placed was a visible, external, Theocracy. When God took the people into covenant with Himself, He became their God not only in a religious, but in a national sense; He became not only the object of their worship, but their King. The same lawgiver framed both the civil and religious code of the nation; the same volume of inspiration which instructed the Jew in his duty towards his Maker, contained also the charter of his national pri-

vileges. Moreover, God not only delivered to the nation the law by which it was to be governed, but charged Himself with the administration of that law; executing its sanctions of reward and of punishment by an immediate exercise of almighty power. These sanctions, as expressed in the books of Moses, were exclusively temporal. The religion, therefore, of the pious Jew was not only a religious, but a national sentiment; it was loyalty as well as religion. To worship other gods besides Jehovah was not only a sin, but a crime; a crime *læsæ majestatis*, or of a treasonable character, and as such visited with the penalties of death. The ideas expressed by the terms sin and crime, between which human legislators know so well how to distinguish, were, under the Jewish polity, perfectly interchangeable.

Following from, or closely connected with, this its fundamental principle, are certain peculiarities which are found to belong to the system. Entering though He did into the relation which He bore to the chosen people, it was yet impossible that God should cease to be what He is,—the Creator, the discerner of hearts, demanding the homage and service of His reasonable creatures: hence the moral law, enjoining the love of God, and forbidding sins of the heart, appears incorporated in the national code; a singular feature which belongs to no other political constitution. There were doubtless other reasons for this ap-

pointment; but to account for it, it seems enough to observe, that in becoming the tutelary God of the nation, God did not abandon His character as the Creator of the universe, and therefore His claims upon the spiritual obedience of His creatures. But to proceed. No projects of foreign conquest, of commercial enterprise, of national aggrandizement, seem to be entertained by the Founder; on the contrary, isolation is His declared aim; the people were to dwell alone, neither intermarrying with the surrounding nations, nor incorporating foreign customs with their own. Many of the laws imposed, both civil and religious, were such as effectually to prevent any considerable expansion of the Hebrew polity beyond the confines of Palestine; as, for example, the rite of circumcision, the command to celebrate the three great feasts at Jerusalem, and the ordinances of the sabbatical year, and of the year of jubilee. To compensate for any disadvantages that might be apprehended from these regulations, temporal blessings, the plenty of the barn and the store, were promised as the reward of loyal obedience, and this not merely to individuals, but to the nation as such. Not only were the expressed sanctions of the Mosaic law exclusively temporal, but national prosperity, and national calamities, were among them; another feature this, which results from the Theocratical constitution, and which distinguishes this polity from all others.

For penalties against breaches of the law form the usual limit of human legislation; seldom, if ever, does it propose rewards to the obedient: nor again does this legislation deal with the nation as such, but with individuals within it; national visitations obviously require, and imply, a power superior to the nation. The perfection of the Theocratical form of government permitted both these provisions, for it brought into operation that extraordinary Providence, by which, and by which alone, they could be executed.

The failure which has attended all attempts to exclude the Theocratical principle from the history of the Jewish commonwealth, and to reconstruct this history on purely secular principles, is notorious; and it may be affirmed, without hesitation, that the theorist who sets out from the supposition that the Mosaic institutions are the product of a later age than that to which they profess to belong, the slow growth of priestly craft or ambition; and the historical Scriptures of the old covenant myths, skilfully constructed to minister to the national pride; will find himself, in his attempts to explain the history of this people, involved in difficulties, compared with which any that may attend the orthodox faith vanish into insignificance. We may safely leave these, the last importations from Germany[h], to the obscurity

[h] See Introduction to the Book of Genesis, by Van Bohlen. Edited by J. Heywood, Esq. M.P. London. 1855. De Wette was the founder of this school.

to which we cannot doubt the practical good sense of this country will consign them. Our own deistical writers, to do them this justice, adopt a more consistent and intelligible course. Without entering into questions of authenticity or date, they boldly arraign the whole system as inconsistent with just views of God, and of the province of political legislation. You ascribe, say these writers, a divine origin to what manifestly bears on it the marks of human imperfection, such imperfection as we do not meet with in confessedly human polities. For the ennobling idea of a supreme, omnipresent Being, who regards all His creatures with equal eye, the Mosaic books present us with a local, tutelary, Deity, who selects an insignificant, and, as their own books declare, undeserving, people as the object of His special regards. The Creator descends to the functions of a civil magistrate, and busies Himself with the distribution of secular rewards and punishments. Under this system too, the inalienable rights of conscience were invaded, and idolatry, which no wise government interferes with, when it does not outrage public decency, was made a capital offence. And what shall we say of a religious constitution professing to emanate from God Himself, which yet seems designedly to avoid any reference to a future state of reward and punishment, and confines its sanctions to the present life? Finally, an unsocial character pervades the whole economy;

and while even heathen states cultivated a spirit of liberal intercourse, amicably interchanging divinities, and tolerating differences of worship, a stern bigotry marks the regulations of the Mosaic code, which could not fail of producing a narrow and fanatical spirit in the people placed under it[i].

I pause not to inquire whether this is a correct statement of the facts of the case, or whence in particular these enlarged notions of the nature of Deity have been derived; whether the shafts directed against the Jewish Scriptures have not, in fact, been borrowed from them, while the obligation has been unthought of or dissembled. We can well maintain, in opposition to these objections, that the polity of Moses was well fitted, nay was absolutely necessary, to bring about the objects for which, as we believe, it was designed. To two of these objects, which seem most intimately connected with the feature of the Jewish polity now under consideration, I shall, in the present Lecture, advert, reserving others that may deserve attention to a future occasion.

It will be admitted then, I suppose, that one great end of the selection of the Jewish people was, that it should be "a keeper and witness of Holy Writ;" to it were to be committed the oracles of God, those divine communications which, extending from the fall to the coming of

[i] Leland, View of the Deistical Writers, vol. i. Letters 9 and 12. vol. ii. Letters 11—13.

Christ, unfolded to the eye of faith, with continually increasing distinctness, the glorious prospects which God had in store for his people.

It will be granted too, that a second principal object of this selection was to preserve the doctrine of the unity, spirituality, and personality of the Divine Being, amidst the universal tendency of the world either, on the part of philosophers, to speculative pantheism, or, on the part of the people, to polytheism with its attendant evils, moral and physical. "Wherefore then," says St. Paul," served the Law? It was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made:" it was "added" to the primitive religion "because of transgressions;" that is, as I think the words are best understood, to restrain the visible outbreaks of sin, particularly the sin of idolatry, until He should come who, for an outward fence of this kind, should substitute a better security, the law written upon the heart. It was necessary that the foundations of religion should be laid deep on true, though possibly imperfect, views of the nature and character of the Divine Being; which further revelations might improve, but must always presuppose. That such an object was worthy of the Divine interference, and was essential to the successful promulgation of the Gospel in after times, no one who is acquainted with the religious condition of heathen antiquity can doubt.

Now as regards the former of the objects, the safe custody and transmission of the sacred oracles, it is obvious that in no way so effectually as by incorporating the successive revelations in the public monuments of a state could their preservation be secured. Had they been scattered communications, given one here and another there, they would have been speedily lost or corrupted; confined to a particular nation, and enshrined in a political framework, they were kept together, and by being combined, furnished mutual illustration. But more than this; the Theocracy lent its aid directly to their preservation. For in the volume of the law, civil and ceremonial, no inconsiderable portion of these prophetic intimations is imbedded, and, under the form of the types, cannot be separated from it; hence the national pride of the Jews became interested in maintaining them intact; with those contained in the Pentateuch at least they could not tamper, without mutilating the charter of their national existence. It is to be observed too, that the prophecies respecting the Gospel were mostly, so to speak, cast in a Jewish mould. From this favoured nation, Messiah, the Prince of the new era, was to spring; Zion was to enlarge her cords and strengthen her stakes; she was to break forth on the right hand and on the left, and her seed was to inherit the Gentiles; Jerusalem, desolate and trodden down of her enemies, was, under

the rule of her exalted King, to attain a height of glory which she had never known, and become the joy of the whole earth[k]. It was the sin of the carnal part of the nation to interpret these prophecies in a carnal sense, but this, under the providence of God, materially tended to secure their safe transmission. Had the Jews in general discerned the spiritual sense which lay hid under these images, drawn from the earthly Zion, they would have felt but little interest in them, but little disposition to watch over their integrity; but interpreting them in a sense most congenial to their sensual tastes, they clung with the greater tenacity to the hopes suggested by them, and faithfully handed down the documents which at once condemn themselves, and furnish us with the evidences of our religion[l].

Turning to the other important end which we have supposed the Mosaic institutions to have had in view, the preservation of the true doctrine of the Divine Nature in the midst of an idolatrous world; under which aspect the Law served as an external barrier against the encroachments of heathen pollution, behind the shelter of which the blossoms of true religion might flourish and expand; what likelihood, we may ask, is there that this doctrine could have been preserved, unaided by the outward fence of a national con-

[k] Is. liv. 1—4. &c.

[l] Pascal, Pensées, Part ii. Art. 8.

stitution? The piety of isolated individuals, like Enoch, or Noah, or Job, would have terminated, in its influence, with themselves or their immediate descendants: the family bond of union would have proved equally powerless to check the advances of idolatry, as we may gather from the case of Jacob's own family[m]; and under any circumstances would have been limited, in its restraining power, to those of immature age: what was needed, was a society invested with sovereign powers, and possessing, as compared with the inferior forms of social union, a principle of permanence, in other words, a national polity. Could a society of this kind be organised, in which sins and crimes should be synonymous terms, in which idolatry in particular, otherwise beyond the reach of civil laws, should be justly punishable with temporal penalties; it is obvious that this, so far as any external institution could curb the corrupt tendencies of fallen man, would be that of which we are in search. Just such was the Jewish Theocracy. The descendants of Abraham were comprehended within the bond of a national polity, with God as its supreme magistrate, in order that the corrupt and rebellious will, in its irreligious no less than its criminal manifestations, might, without doing violence to any natural rights, be kept in check. Idolatry became punishable not as such, but as treason; and neither were the claims of conscience within its own proper

[m] Gen. xxxv. 2.

sphere disallowed, nor was any precedent afforded to Christian states to extirpate by force what they conceive to be religious error. For not until it can be shewn that God has delivered to a Christian state a law prescribing the manner in which He is to be worshipped, and made that law part of the civil constitution of the state, will any argument from the supposed parallel of the Jewish economy hold good.

That the Theocracy did not, in point of fact, perfectly accomplish this its purpose; that repeated lapses into the idolatrous practices of the neighbouring nations took place, and finally ten tribes, the larger part of the nation, were for this sin removed from their native land, never, as it should seem, to return;—is but one of the many instances that meet us of the apparent frustration of God's purposes by man's perverseness. It is not the actual effect, but the tendency, the natural result, of the institution that we should consider; and it seems that no other appointment could have given such promise of securing the desired end. Moreover, it is by no means the truth, that the failure was complete. We have reason to believe that the Jewish law, to a great extent, answered its purpose of fencing off from the chosen people the grosser abominations of paganism. Long intervals, which the Scriptures hardly notice, of obedience and consequent national prosperity, occurred; and if two national extirpations, one

temporary and the other final, were necessary to purge out the corrupt leaven, yet they did at last succeed in doing so, and Christ, when He came, found a people, morally indeed corrupt,—fanatical, rancorous, and self-righteous,—but cleaving with unconquerable tenacity to the fundamental truths of their religion, the unity and spirituality of God, and as strongly opposed to idolatry, as their forefathers were prone to indulge in that sin.

What has been said being borne in mind, the deistical objections before mentioned, which have afforded a fallacious triumph to the unbeliever, while they may sometimes occasion perplexity to the Christian, will be found to lose their force. The system bore a character of exclusiveness; but what barrier can be otherwise than exclusive? If care had not been taken to isolate this people, by peculiar customs and peculiar prohibitions, from the surrounding nations, the very end of their constitution would have been defeated; iniquity would have come in like a flood, and every vestige of a purer worship would have been effaced. If, notwithstanding the severe penalties denounced in their law, and their actual experience of them, the Jews were so prone to adulterate their religion with foreign admixtures, what would have been the probable result had these prohibitory enactments been wholly wanting? Moreover, this unsociable character of the law has been exag-

gerated. The sojourning of strangers in the land is contemplated, and towards these, if conformable to the fundamental law of the state, humanity and benevolence were to be shewn[n]. But the sanctions of the Law were purely temporal; the fact is undeniable, and how could it be otherwise? If a visible Theocracy was to be established, temporal sanctions, the proper sanctions of civil legislation, must be adopted; and, as regards the nation, none but temporal could be admitted, for nations as such have no existence beyond this life. Let it not be replied, that since nations are but an aggregate of individuals, individual retribution, partly inflicted here, and partly threatened hereafter, would have answered the same end: however difficult it may be to draw the line of distinction, we all feel that there is such a thing as national disgrace or calamity, as distinguished from individual suffering. And nations as such, be it again observed, can only be visited in this life, that is, with temporal inflictions. To have inserted in the public code of the nation eternal sanctions, would have been virtually to dissolve it as an earthly polity, and to reduce it to a collection of individuals, or at best to a Church in the Christian sense of the word, that is, a purely religious society, and therefore unable to exercise the stringent powers necessary to suppress the visible excesses of idolatry and superstition. I am

[n] Levit. xix. 34. Deut. x. 18, 19. xxiv. 17—19.

aware that other reasons, and to the Christian most convincing ones, have been alleged for what no one can deny, the absence of any express allusion to a future state in the books of Moses. Thus it has been remarked, that since eternal life was confessedly unattainable by the Law, the doctrines of a future state could not consistently appear in it; the Atonement was not yet effected, the forfeited gift was not yet recovered; with what propriety then could the revelation of it be vouchsafed[o]? It has been urged too, and with no less force, that a promise inserted *in* the Law, would have been understood as a promise annexed *to* the Law[p], and so have fostered that error which was the great stumblingblock of the later Jews, the error of attributing perfection, as regards the forgiveness of sin, and the gift of eternal life, to the old covenant; which necessarily led to a depreciated estimate of the Gospel. These reasons for the omission appear unanswerable; but even if they were not, it would still, it should seem, be sufficient to urge, that an outward Theocracy being necessary to make sins against God crimes against the state, and so to act as a breakwater against the surrounding surges of impiety, none but temporal sanctions could explicitly appear in such a polity.

If, conceding the point as regards the nation, the

[o] Davison, on Prophecy, p. 132.

[p] Lancaster, Harmony of the Law and Gospel, p. 12.

objector should still ask, Why, in the case of individuals, (and it is to be remembered, that the extraordinary Providence, which supplied the omission of a future state, applied to individuals no less than to the nation as such[q],) were not eternal added to the temporal sanctions? The answer is, that the interpretation placed on the addition of such auxiliary sanctions would no doubt have been, that Moses distrusted the fulfilment of his own predictions of temporal reward and punishment, and sought to meet the possible failure by employing other motives drawn from the invisible world, where the fraud, according to the atheist scoff, could not be detected[r]. Nor must the absence of explicit eternal sanctions in the Law be supposed to imply, that the individual transgressor had nothing to fear beyond this life. Promises and threatenings of a general character are interspersed throughout, which might well suggest hopes and fears of future retribution. "The Law," it has been observed, "in its sanction, is only positive, that God will do so much; not exclusive, that He will do no more[s]." But while it rather stimulated, certainly did not contradict, the suggestions of pious hope and the forebodings of

[q] As in the case of Achan, for example, Josh. vii.

[r] Bonarum et malarum actionum repromissiones pollicetur (scriptura), in futurâ tamen vitâ, ne fraus detegi possit. Vanini, quoted by Warburton, D. L. b. v. s. 5.

[s] Davison on Prophecy, p. 131.

conscience, its openly proposed sanctions were those which alone are suitable to a temporal polity, and which alone could have made an impression on such a people as the Israelites then were, or indeed on any people as such;—present retribution, supported by sensible interpositions and manifestations of the Divine power.

And here we must, for the present, pause. We have considered the Theocracy only in its negative aspect, as conservative of important truths, and repulsive of adverse influences; more interesting, to the Christian at least, are its positive uses, as a school of discipline for the ancient believer, and an earthly, and typical, representation of the spiritual relations which, under the Gospel, subsist between God and His people. These I propose to make the subject of the following discourse. Meanwhile, I trust it has been shewn, that in its structure, as a form of national polity, and even in those peculiarities which, at first sight, might seem difficult of explanation, it bears traces of that Divine wisdom, which is most conspicuously seen in the perfect adaptation of the means used to the ends proposed.

LECTURE II.

GALATIANS iii. 24.

The Law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ.

THAT the Jewish Theocracy was fitted, in its structure, to ensure the preservation and integrity of the sacred oracles, and to maintain the worship of the one true God amidst the universal tendency to idolatry; that, so far from being justly chargeable with imperfections inconsistent with its alleged divine origin, it exhibits, in its fusion of civil and religious government and in its subordinate peculiarities, the only means by which, without violating the rights of conscience, these ends could be secured; I endeavoured, in the preceding Lecture, to establish. But we should form a very inadequate notion of the Mosaic dispensation, did we confine our view to this its negative operation, its restraining and repellent quality merely. We can in no wise admit the view of those, of whom a distinguished commentator on the laws of Moses may be taken as the representative, by whom the idea of this

dispensation is reduced to the lowest possible; and the Theocracy is regarded as a purely civil institution, enjoining, and satisfied with, an outward allegiance to Jehovah as the tutelary God of the nation. Thus, arguing against Warburton's proof of the divine mission of Moses from the absence of any save temporal sanctions in the Law, as being in his opinion useless, the writer alluded to makes the observation, "How ridiculous would an Act of Parliament appear, which should denounce the pains of hell as the punishment of a crime[a]!" He finds "in the Mosaic system nothing that could have been designed to maintain, in its purity, the doctrine of a Messiah, or even preserve it at all. Moses framed no symbolic books for the people to subscribe, nor did he publish any doctrine, the belief of which was enjoined under pain of punishment. For instance, though he describes God as all-wise, almighty, good, and the like, yet if any man doubted of this, or of the coming of a Messiah, he did not thereby become liable to any punishment by the Law. The worship of one only God, in so far as it stands opposed to idolatry, was the sole point which Moses made it the grand object of his policy to establish and maintain to the latest period[b]." Such, in his own words, is the theory of the learned German. It excludes, as will be per-

[a] Michaelis, Comment. b. i. art. 14.

[b] Ibid. b. ii. c. 4. art. 32.

ceived, from our conception of the Mosaic Law, all prospective references, all ulterior aims, every thing of a disciplinary and typical character, and by presenting only half the truth, leads to positive error.

We have but to open the volume of Scripture, to perceive how defective such a view of the scope of the ancient dispensation is. Contrast with it such passages as the following, which meet us continually in the books of Moses; "I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine[c]." "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and to hearken to His voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, that thou shouldest keep all His commandments; that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God[d]." Or let us listen to St. Paul, and he will tell us that the Law presented "a shadow of things to come[e];" that "the Law was a schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ[f];" that "as the heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and

[c] Levit. xx. 24—26.
[d] Deut. xxvi. 17—19.
[e] Col. ii. 17.
[f] Gal. iii. 24.

governors, until the time appointed of the father;" so the ancient believers "were in bondage under the elements of the world[g]," a system of rudimentary ordinances, imposed for a special and temporary purpose. It is impossible not to perceive that the Law is here described, not merely as a fence against the corruptions of heathenism, but, in the first place, as a school of discipline and education, of a strictly ethical, and not a cosmical, character; intended, that is, to operate upon the will and the conscience by means of law, emanating from a holy God, and issuing in the holiness of the creature; and, in the second place, as a typical adumbration, under earthly figures, of the future economy, of which Christ is the Mediator and the Head. These are the points to which I would now invite your attention; requesting that it be borne in mind, that by the term Law is meant the whole system of Moses, as a polity, and not any particular appointments, typical or otherwise, belonging to it: we are still considering the structure of the Theocracy in general, only, as in the former Lecture more under its political, so as in this more under its religious, aspect.

I. The Law, then, was "a schoolmaster," a system of educational discipline, to bring men to Christ. On the lessons which it inculcated, the subject-matter of its teaching, whether by type or by prophecy, I make no remark at present, further

[g] Gal. iv. 1—3.

than that all its appointments were intended to exhibit and to inculcate the two great truths of the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God; I wish to confine your attention, as much as possible, to the mode of spiritual operation, which belongs to the Law as a religious system.

All religions consist, or aim at consisting, partly of external acts of worship, and partly of the inner sentiments, whether love or fear, or both combined, of the worshipper; but a difference of relation between what is outward and what is inward may give rise to very different, and indeed opposite, systems. A religion may propose to work either from without inwards, or from within outwards; that is, its external system, its ritual and polity, may either be the instrument of forming the inner sentiment, or it may be the natural expression of that sentiment, otherwise formed; it may either be a mould impressing its stamp upon a passive material, or it may be the true organic form, thrown out, in its proper manifestations, by force of the spirit within. The former was the mode of operation peculiar to the Law of Moses; the latter is that characteristic of the Gospel of Christ.

Let an impartial inquirer open the volume of the New Testament, and, after having attentively perused its various portions, deliver his opinion, whether the aspect which Christianity there presents is that of a ceremonial law. We cannot

doubt what the result of the inquiry will be. He will find our Lord assuming throughout His earthly course the character of a prophet, or teacher; unfolding the full import of the moral law, rebuking the external formalism of the Pharisee and the unbelief of the Sadducee, instructing His disciples in the deeper mysteries of His kingdom:—never that of a lawgiver, in the sense in which Moses was. Towards the close of His ministry, while celebrating the last Passover with His disciples, He took occasion to set apart one of its customary rites, the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine, to be, amongst Christians, a perpetual memorial of His death and of the atonement thereby effected, and a pledge of their fellowship with Him and with each other. After His resurrection, He appropriated to Christian uses another familiar rite, long in use amongst the Jews, that of baptism, to mark visibly the entrance of the believer upon the duties and privileges of an acknowledged member of the Church. But beyond the simple appointment of these ordinances, little appears in the sacred record. Believers are to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; baptized Christians are to eat of the bread and drink of the cup; thus much, and not much more, can be positively gathered from the terms of the original institution, which comprises no liturgical formulary, and seems purposely to decline any details of ritual. The import of the

two Sacraments of the Gospel, the truths they symbolize and commemorate, being supposed to be understood by Christians, much, as regards the outward administration, is left undefined, and to be supplied according to the usages of time, climate, country, or national character. The same may be said of the Apostolic appointments which meet us later on in the inspired pages. We have certain general principles, certain leading precedents, laid down for the guidance of Christian societies in their internal arrangements and external organization; but, as before, a studied absence of minute details, a singular abstinence from positive legislation on such points. It seems as if the Apostles thought that Christians could be trusted, to a great extent, to frame regulations for themselves, always of course in an Apostolical spirit, as circumstances might call for a contraction or extension of the existing ones. The band which encircles Christianity in the Christian Scriptures is of elastic materials. Such, I apprehend, is the general impression which a perusal of these Scriptures conveys to the mind.

Turn now to the books of Moses, and mark how entirely different is the religious system therein pourtrayed. A complicated ritual, descending to the minutest details, regulates from without the religious life of the Jew. He cannot move in any direction without finding himself confronted by some law, or precept, which confines

his liberty of action, and prescribes what course he is to take. If a tabernacle is to be erected, it must be of a certain size, of certain materials, of certain furniture; if there must be priests to minister in it, their tribe and family, their ritual of consecration, their very garments, must all be accurately prescribed; if the worshipper would offer sacrifice, a number of minute ceremonies must be observed; later on in his history, if he would celebrate the praises of God, while Christians are exhorted to speak to themselves "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs[h]," an inspired hymnal coming to him from without, shapes his devotions. His food, his raiment, his domestic arrangements, are matter of law. Even on the diseases incident to the climate, the natural infirmities of the body, and the last great change which in this life that body undergoes, a structure of legal prescriptions is raised which must have required for their fulfilment no small measure of time and attention. "Touch not, taste not, handle not;"—this was the spirit of the Mosaic religion, and by reason of the Theocratical form of government, all the regulations of the Law, political and domestic, as well as those appertaining to the worship of God, partook of a religious character; so that it is nothing but the truth to say, that, in the case of the Jew, his religion hemmed him in on every side, interfered with every function of life, and by

[h] Ephes. v. 19.

its incessant and importunate demands placed him under a yoke of bondage, which he confessed it was difficult to bear[i]. Such is the contrast, a stronger one cannot be imagined, which this system presents to that unfolded to us in the New Testament Scriptures. The Mosaic religion, as I have observed, proposed to work upon man from without inwards, the Christian proceeds in the reverse direction.

But that we may gain a clearer insight into the nature of the old dispensation, let us dwell awhile upon the analogy which, more than once, St. Paul employs to illustrate its principles. The analogy is drawn from the ordinary process of education. "The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ;" the Jew, though an heir to the fairest prospects, was "under tutors and governors," until the time came for his manumission, and his entrance upon the privileges and responsibilities of manhood. Now the work of education is, as we know, conducted on the principle of working from without inwards: discipline and habituation are the teacher's main instruments. All that he expects to find present, at first, is, innate capacities on which virtuous habits may be engrafted; the habits themselves he proposes to work into the character by a course of suitable discipline. While the moral sense is as yet feeble, he connects the idea of present suffering with

[i] Acts xv. 10.

misconduct, and present enjoyment with dutiful obedience; a mode of treatment which is laid aside in proportion as the pupil advances in power of self-determination, and in moral discernment. Enlarge the educational system into a national polity, and you have the ancient idea of a state, according to which it is a school of virtuous training for the citizens; such an idea as floated before the mind of Plato in his imaginary Republic. The other great philosopher, whose works are so much studied here, points out to us the principle on which such an institution must produce its effect. Describing the formation of virtuous habits by repeated acts, he adduces, in confirmation of his theory, the example of lawgivers, with whom, he says, it is usual to employ the power of habit in the improvement of the citizens (*ἐθίζοντες ποιοῦσιν ἀγαθοὺς*[k]), that is, they aim at producing inward effects by a system of external discipline. The effects said to have been produced on the national character by the legislation of Sparta, present us with a remarkable instance of the nature and operation of a system which commences from without, with the view of ultimately leading to interior results.

It is obvious that a system of this kind, whether its object be the education of an individual or of a state, presupposes some degree of indisposition towards its requirements, or at least a feebleness

[k] Ethic. Nic. l. ii. c. 1.

of moral power which needs external support and direction. "The law" (so far forth as it is law) "is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners[1]." It is because we cannot trust children with the shaping of their own course, because we have reason to suspect in their case the absence of confirmed habits, moral and intellectual, that we endeavour to supply the place of such habits by an external framework of rules to which, without caring at first whether the import or the reasons of them be understood, we compel obedience. And the less the power of self-direction supposed to be present, the more the external enactments are multiplied, so as to confine the pupil on every side, and leave as little as possible to his own discretion. The appointments, under such circumstances, will naturally incur an arbitrary and artificial aspect; for the intention being to curb the propensities of undisciplined nature, and to give a specific direction to whatever naturally right feelings may be in existence, positive enactments, the reason of which may not be apparent, must be multiplied, and the more arbitrary the enactments, the better, in some cases, are they adapted to secure the desired end. We do not admit that any of the Mosaic appointments were in fact arbitrary, but maintain that if they had been, this circumstance, under such a system,

[1] 1 Tim. i. 9.

would not have been surprising. The object here being rather to form than to direct the internal habit, rather to impart a bias than to regulate it, a pressure from without must be applied, which may supply the lack of spontaneous promptings within.

What an exact analogy in the points just mentioned the Jewish dispensation presents, will, I think, be acknowledged; and the parallel holds good in other respects, which the Apostle has not so explicitly dwelt upon. I have observed, that in the work of education, present rewards and punishments are employed to secure obedience, and the more effectively the system is carried out, the more immediate is the connexion between an act and its consequences: I need not again direct your attention to the extraordinary Providence which under the Theocracy distributed at once, and infallibly, to every transgression its penalty, to every act of obedience its reward; which in a moment struck Nadab and Abihu dead for offering strange fire before the Lord, and brought to light the hidden sin of Achan, that it might receive its due award of punishment. Moreover the rewards and punishments which the teacher employs must be sensible and material; those which are of a spiritual nature will have little or no effect on children; at least in the early stages of the process of education. By equally elementary means the religious affections of the Jew,

whether love or fear, were elicited. Just as in the case of the young child, it is the perception of material benefits, the removal of the pangs of hunger, or other uneasy bodily sensations, which, in the first instance, draws forth the emotions of love and gratitude towards those by whom these wants are relieved; so the Jew, at his first entrance on the course of spiritual training under which he was placed, was engaged for the service of God by immediate and sensible advantages, and learned to love his heavenly King while yet but imperfectly acquainted with the full extent of his obligations, or the blessings in store for him. It was not required of him that he should walk by faith; the mental eye was too feeble to look forward to things unseen; and those temporal sanctions which the political character of the Jewish Church alone admitted were equally rendered necessary by the immaturity of the Jew in the matter of religion. Thus a present result was gained which might be, and was intended to be, directed to higher purposes; when these earthly sentiments, founded on earthly motives, should, under such a measure of the Spirit's influence as belonged to the elder dispensation, and by means of the various appliances of discipline and instruction therein provided, gradually rise into a higher element, and the Christianity of the Old Testament, as pourtrayed in the Psalms and Prophets, should emerge into view, and grow

in distinctness of feature and completeness of proportion, until at length it should burst the shell by which it was at once confined and protected, and attain, under the Gospel, "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

That the Mosaic system then was rudimentary, external, a system of "carnal ordinances," to adopt the strong language of the Epistle to the Hebrews[m], is evident, and the question now arises, Why was such a system necessary? can we arrive at a satisfactory conviction that no other would have been equally suitable? It has already been remarked, that all such educational institutes presuppose deficiencies within, mental and moral; and the answer in general to the question just mentioned will be, that the Jew, especially at the period of the promulgation of the Law, was incapable of a more spiritual mode of treatment. In the first place, the materials of a more spiritual economy did not as yet exist. The Atonement was as yet but prospective, the Holy Spirit, as I shall have occasion to shew hereafter, did not operate as He does under the Gospel; and God's gracious designs, as regards the redemption of our race, lay imbedded, and concealed, in the obscure intimation that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and in the promises to Abraham. Nor were these defects perfectly remedied throughout the whole course of the

[m] Heb. ix. 10.

dispensation. To the last the Jew walked in comparative darkness; to the last the powerful motives which affect the Christian, derived from the infinite love of God as exhibited in the completed work of redemption, and from the authoritative announcement of a future resurrection of the body to life or to death eternal, could not be brought to bear upon the ancient believer; to the last therefore he needed stimulants to his piety drawn from inferior sources. And, in the next place, it is obvious, from the inspired history, that the Israelites, at the period of their history alluded to, were, as regards religion, a people of extremely rude conceptions. Their notions of the Divine nature and attributes had, during their residence in Egypt, become, to the last degree, childish and corrupt; and so deeply had the taint of idolatry affected their minds, that it required centuries of discipline, and the temporary dissolution of the whole polity, to purge it out. Unless then it had pleased God to deviate from His ordinary course, by dissipating instantaneously and miraculously the clouds of spiritual darkness in which the selected race, in common with the rest of mankind, was involved, a mode of training, suitable to the low capacities of the subject, must be adopted. If even after centuries of training under his law, the Jew was, as St. Paul declares, a child, not yet emancipated from the yoke, we can well conceive, that when he was led

forth by Moses from Egypt, he needed to be dealt with as an infant in religion. And as such he was treated. Fenced round on every side against the encroachments of heathenism, he was taught the elements (στοιχεῖα[n]) of piety by means suited to his infantile capacity—by type, by symbol, and by the "bodily exercise" of literal enactments.

But the point before us demands to be considered a little more closely. There is reason to suspect that in many minds some confusion of thought exists as to the spiritual standing of the Jew as a Jew, which interferes with just views of the nature of the ancient economy, and of its relation to the new. The question then is, How are we to define a member of the Theocracy? We describe a Christian as a man in Christ; one, that is, who has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, who has been justified through faith, who is a new creature, and walks in newness of life; this is our conception of a true, living, member of Christ, and of Christ's church; and in so describing the Christian, we do not intend to pourtray an advanced Christian as distinguished from a novice, we are not speaking of degrees in the Christian life, but we are enumerating the characteristics which are essential to our conception of any real Christian. Now what is our corresponding notion of the Jew; the Jew as we find him when placed under his law, not as what he

[n] Gal. iv. 3.

might ultimately become? What was necessary to constitute a real member of the Theocracy? It is on this point that I conceive some degree of misapprehension prevails, which prevents us from perceiving the fitness, the necessity, of such an elementary system as that which has been described.

I venture to think then, that here, as in some other instances, we are apt to introduce into the Old Testament more of Christianity, in its distinctive features, than is borne out by the facts of the case. That, as regards the knowledge of Christian doctrines, and the sanctions of our covenant, this error has been occasionally committed, few, who inspect our popular hymns and books of theology, can, I think, doubt. Let me here make one remark, which may be of use to students of the Jewish Scriptures. Imbued as we have been from childhood with the great doctrines of the Gospel, and still more, accustomed as we are to look upon, and to read, the Bible as one book, it is very difficult for us to form an adequate conception of the limited amount of religious knowledge, possessed, as far as we see, by the Jew, particularly in the earlier period of his history. Few of us, perhaps, when we turn over the leaves of our Bibles, realize sufficiently the fact, that we have in our hands a record of progressive revelation, extending, from the first intimation of a Saviour in the book of Genesis to the actual advent of that Saviour, over an interval

of more than 4000 years; and that centuries sometimes elapsed between one inspired communication and another. The only way to arrive at just views respecting the degree of spiritual illumination enjoyed by the ancient believer at any given period, is to suppose that all the books of Scripture subsequent to that period had perished, and then to examine how much of Christianity we can fairly extract from the portion that is left. If the whole of the Old Testament be subjected to this process, that is, if we separate from it mentally the volume of the Christian Scriptures in which the cyphers of the Law find their full interpretation, we shall be surprised, I suspect, to find how slow, how gradual, and to the last how defective, was the communication of divine truth to the ancient church. The student will discover the germs of his religion under type and symbol; and with high gratification will trace the gradual disclosure of the Christian mysteries, in all their separate branches, until prophecy, big with its mighty theme, becomes instinct with Christian hope and sentiment, and reflects from all its surface the glories of the approaching advent, even as the morning clouds assume richer and deeper tints as the luminary of day advances to the horizon; but he will find a veil of comparative obscurity spread over doctrines which with us are the first principles of religion, such as the atonement of Christ, regeneration by the Spirit,

and the resurrection of the body to life eternal. And the effect on his mind of the observation of this inferiority of the old as compared with the new covenant will be, not that he will be led to undervalue the former which never professed to be a perfect revelation, but that he will learn to recognise in the Saviour the true light of the world; in that He both recovered for us, and has fully revealed to us, life and immortality; and will learn to estimate more highly his own privilege in living under a dispensation in which the shadows of the dawn have given place to the full brightness of noon-day.

Now the point which I would suggest for your consideration is, whether the spiritual standing of the Jew, as a member of the Theocracy, did not partake of the same imperfection as unquestionably belonged to the revelation vouchsafed to him. The primary fact which seems sometimes lost sight of is this, that the Jew was a Jew by natural birth, whereas, whatever view we may take of the nature or instrument of regeneration, no one is a Christian until he be born again°. The overlooking of so capital a distinction could not fail of leading to conclusions partially erroneous. The privileges of the old covenant, those at least which belonged to the people as such, were attached to a carnal descent from Abraham, just as the privileges of English-

° 1 John iii. 3.

men belong to them by natural birth; in the one case, as in the other, liable to forfeiture under certain circumstances of rebellious disobedience; there was here no question, as there is no mention, of a regenerating spirit effecting a change of heart, as the initial point whence the Jew entered on his course of legal training. Nor does it appear that circumcision, by which he became a publicly acknowledged member of the Theocracy, wrought any change in his inward condition. I do not say that in no sense was circumcision a sacrament; but if by that term he meant a means of grace, then to call it a sacrament is, I cannot but think, an instance of the tendency just now alluded to, to introduce the Gospel into the Law. Circumcision was the sign of the Mosaic covenant, an emblem to the Jew of what he ought to be, to him perhaps as striking a one as baptism is to us; but that it was a covenanted means, or channel, of spiritual influence, no where, I think, appears. I am far from intending to insinuate, that under the Theocracy spiritual influences were not at work; I shall have hereafter to assume that the Spirit was in some sense then given; but that the Jew did not commence his course of training under the Law as a spiritual man, and that the Theocracy was not a Church, in the New Testament sense of the word, seems plain from the absence of any promise of divine grace as part of the blessings comprised in the covenant of Sinai. So far as

this grace was given, it was given, to adopt Bishop Bull's accurate expression, under, not by virtue of, the Law[o]. In vain will the reader of the books of Moses search in them for any distinct allusion to the sanctifying influences of the Spirit; one or two passages he may discover, from which a pious and reflective mind might have inferred the presence of supernatural agency, as when God promises, on the repentance of the people in captivity, to "circumcise the heart[p]" of them and of their seed; but explicit references to assistance from above to fulfil the requirements of the Law, are as scanty in this portion at least of the Old Testament as they are abundant in every page of the New. The very duty of prayer, which forms so prominent a feature of Apostolic instructions, is no where in the Pentateuch universally enjoined, nor is any promise of a favourable hearing annexed to the performance of the duty[q]. Yet we cannot doubt that pious men of old offered prayer to God, and that their prayers were heard; but in the exercise on their part, and the acceptance on the part of God, of this confession of their wants, they stood not upon legal ground, but upon the primitive footing of those who came to God because they

[o] Harm. Apost. c. xi. §. 4.

[p] Deut. xxx. 6.

[q] There are but three instances in the Pentateuch in which prayer is enjoined (Deut. xxvi. 13—15; xxi. 7, 8. Numb. vi. 24—26.); and these relate only to public or particular occasions. See Lancaster, Harmony, &c. c. 7.

believed that He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him[r].

If these remarkable facts be thought to throw any light on an obscure point, we shall best perhaps consider the position of the Jew, on his first entrance into the school of the Law, as somewhat analogous to that of such members of a visible Christian Church as are not yet fully under the influence of the Spirit; who are operated upon from without by appliances of various kinds, such as the ministry of the word, the sacraments, the life and conversation of the living members of Christ, in short all that we comprise under the term Christian influences, and which may produce considerable effects without leading to decided personal piety, as, on a large scale, we may see in the changes in public manners and sentiment which invariably follow from the introduction of Christianity into a nation; who are wrought upon, I say, from without by these instruments of the Spirit together, no doubt, with some measure of the strivings of the Spirit to gain an entrance into the heart; but in whom Christ, the hope of glory, is not yet fully formed, and who still therefore have not emerged from the Christian training school into the liberty of the children of God. The difference between the two cases consists in this, that such imperfect Christians, if they may be so called, are not dealt with as children but as

[r] Heb. xi. 6.

men; the motives of a fully revealed Gospel are brought to bear upon them, spiritual power is assured to them if they will but seek it, they are called to walk by faith, and not by sight; whereas in the case of the Jew, owing to the comparative scantiness of his revelation, and of the supply of the Spirit of grace under his economy, the appliances were necessarily more elementary in their nature. And thus instead of the word of God, as a means of grace, announcing a finished atonement and opening up an assured prospect beyond the grave, he had the Law with its complicated ceremonial, proclaiming indeed the same lessons, of the necessity of holiness in the creature, of the possibility of reconciliation with God, of some future better rest provided for the faithful descendant of Abraham, but proclaiming them chiefly under symbol, and figure, appealing to the senses; instead of the crowning manifestation of God's love in the gift of His Son being presented to him as a motive to obedience, an earthly deliverance and temporal blessings called forth his gratitude, God, as the prophet Jeremiah says, taking his ancient people by the hand[s], that is, by the sensible connexion of outward benefits, in order to lead them onwards to the destiny in store for them; instead of faith being his religious characteristic, as it is ours, his path, lying on a lower level, conducted him through a region of sight,

[s] Jer. xxxi. 32.

where nothing but gross and most culpable inattention could induce forgetfulness of the Divine presence and the Divine mercies. It was thus that to the spiritual childhood of the Jew, God, in His great condescension, manifested Himself, in the first instance, under the guise of an earthly Benefactor and King; "I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the house of bondage," therefore "ye shall have no other gods before Me[t];" gaining their confidence by visible marks of His goodness, and alluring them by the sweetness of temporal mercies to follow Him in a way they knew not, a way which they would soon discover to be one of trial, and chastening, and self-knowledge, but leading in the end to spiritual blessings of which the earthly presented but a faint shadow. For this dispensation began with love to God, in the lower sense just mentioned, and terminated in conviction of sin; ours begins with conviction of sin, and once more conducts to love to God in the highest, deepest sense, as the fruit of the indwelling of His Spirit.

Apprehensive of having already dwelt too long on this head of the discourse, I must decline pursuing some interesting trains of thought connected with the point before us. But let me request the reader of Scripture, who, taught by his Church and his Bible to believe "that the condition of man is such," that without special

[t] Exod. xx. 2, 3.

grace he cannot rise into the sphere of the spiritual life, and when in it cannot perfect holiness as God requires it of him[u], may be perplexed at finding in the books of Moses love to God with all the heart made to the Jew the condition—not indeed of eternal life, for that the covenant of Sinai was a covenant of works in that sense is a fiction of divines, but certainly—of his retaining possession of Canaan[x], as if God were proposing to his creatures a blessing on the performance of a condition which they never could fulfil; let me request him, I say, to consider, whether he is not, from Christian habits of thought, unduly exalting the love of God required of the Jew at Sinai, to an equality with that spiritual affection which the natural man can never experience; whether this Jewish sentiment were not analogous in nature to the hearty allegiance of a faithful subject to a gracious sovereign and benefactor, though from the theocratical constitution of the state, it necessarily possessed a religious character. The requirements of the divine law must always be intrinsically the same; God

[u] Art. x. xii. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 1 John i. 8, 9.

[x] Deut. vi. 4, 5. Mr. Fairbairn (Typology, &c. ii. p. 153.) remarks, that the inheritance (of Canaan) was freely given by promise to Abraham and his seed, and therefore could not be *acquired* by obedience to the Law: this is true; but their *retention* of the gift was clearly made dependent on the observance of the covenant, which, among other things, or rather as comprising every thing else, required love to God. See Deut. passim.

can never be satisfied with less than the surrender of the heart, and the notion that the service required of the Jew was a mere outward one, or a mere abstinence from idolatry, is contradicted in every page of the Pentateuch; but the affection required may have varied somewhat in quality according as God manifested Himself as a temporal benefactor, or as a Redeemer from sin and its consequences. It was under the former aspect that the Jew contemplated Jehovah; and so fully appreciable even by the mere natural man were the benefits bestowed, that it may not have needed any spiritual influence, or at any rate but a small measure of it, to call forth the corresponding natural affection. On the commonest principles of morality the Jew ought to have heartily loved and obeyed his divine Benefactor, and the natural sentiments thus elicited were intended, under the growing light of revelation, and such spiritual aids as were given under the Law, to be gradually transmuted into something more properly spiritual; a transmutation which in the pious part of the nation did actually take place. If this be so, the Jew was expelled from Canaan, not so much, or so directly, because he failed in rising from natural to spiritual affections towards God, as because he failed, as he notoriously did, in exhibiting the natural affections. He "rebelled" as well as "vexed" the "Holy Spirit[y];" he slew the

[y] Isaiah lxiii. 10.

King's messengers, who came exhibiting their credentials; he, in heart and spirit, renounced his allegiance. And on this ground, not to speak of others, his expulsion was most just[z].

But I refrain from pursuing the subject further. Enough perhaps has been said to enable us to perceive, that the confessedly elementary character of the Mosaic economy, as a religious system, was rendered necessary by the spiritual incapacity of the Jew of Sinai, whether we attribute that incapacity to the deteriorating influences to which he was exposed in Egypt, or to the inherent imperfection of his religious standing, or, as I think is nearest the truth, to both combined. And I have dwelt the more fully on this subject, because the feature in question has, among others, been singled out by our Deistical writers for their attacks. How unworthy of the Deity, so the objection runs, how manifestly inadequate to express the true relations between man and his Maker, was this system, of which the most prominent characteristic was a multiplicity of rites and ceremonies, apparently arbitrary in their nature, with which the time and attention of the people

[y] Isaiah lxiii. 10.

[z] The expulsion of the Jews from Canaan, notwithstanding the abhorrence of idolatry which, after their return from Babylon, they exhibited, need occasion no difficulty, if it be borne in mind, that from the first love to God, and not the mere abstinence from idolatry, was made the condition of blessing.

must have been chiefly occupied[b]. And if we choose to forget the preparatory character of the Theocracy, and the ulterior objects of it, that is, if we separate Judaism from Christianity, we may, no doubt, find it difficult to vindicate the consistency of the former with our notions of a religion purporting to proceed from Him who is a Spirit, and who demands that they who worship Him should do so in spirit and in truth. But the Mosaic system was never intended to be a final one. It was a school of preparatory training, in which certain habits of thought and feeling were to be wrought into the national character by a forcible pressure from without; and under such a system the forms of religion are of paramount importance, for it is by these that the inner spirit is to be called into existence. The object aimed at is to hold human nature in a fixed mould until it has received the desired impression, and imbibed the spirit which lies latent or imprisoned in the form; the mould therefore must be of inflexible material, incapable of expansion and contraction, and of elaborate finish; and must press from without upon all parts of the religious life. The lawgiver will multiply rules, enjoin specific acts of religion, appoint "days, and months, and times, and years;" instead of general principles issue literal prescriptions; in short, construct such a religious polity as by the Divine wisdom, and

[b] Leland, Deistical Writers, i. Let. 12.

consistently as we trust it has been shewn with the Divine wisdom, was actually imposed on the Jewish people.

II. I proceed, with greater brevity, to make some remarks on the Theocracy, under the last point of view in which it presents itself to the reader of Scripture; as an earthly figure, or representation, of the future Kingdom of Christ, and of the relations subsisting between God and His people under the covenant of grace. Indeed this is not properly a distinct topic from the former; it falls under the idea of the Law considered as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ: for it belongs to the process of education not only to supply the lack of internal habits by the props of external discipline, but to present to the immature mind correct representations of things, though it may be under the form of parables or images. We may however consider the subject separately.

The reader of the New Testament then will soon discover that Christians, in their collective capacity, are there frequently represented under analogies drawn from the ancient covenant; as when they are described as "the Israel of God[b]," "the city of the living God," the "new" or "the heavenly Jerusalem[c]," or as when St. Paul speaks of "our commonwealth (πολίτευμα) being from heaven[d]," expressions manifestly derived from the

[b] Gal. vi. 16. [c] Heb. xi. 22. Gal. iv. 26. [d] Phil. iii. 20.

Jewish polity, and transferred to Christian uses. From the same source have come the terms which describe the benefits and privileges which belong to Christians, particularly those expressed in the words, election, calling, adoption, and sanctification, all of which, as we know, are found in the Old Testament applied to the Jewish people, and thence have passed into the Gospel.

Very remarkably is the principle I am contending for exemplified in the *history* of the chosen people; their deliverance from Egypt, their wanderings in the wilderness, their contests with the Canaanites, and their final settlement not under Moses the Lawgiver, but under Joshua the typical Saviour, in the promised land. His spiritual perceptions, one would think, must be dull who does not perceive, under these earthly adumbrations, the history both of the Church collectively, and of each Christian's experience in particular, pourtrayed in striking colours; who, on looking back on past trials and past mercies, cannot enter into the spirit of the words addressed of old to Israel, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee[e];" who does not recognise in the difficulties with which the people had to contend a lively image of the straitness of the gate and narrowness of the way that leadeth to life, in their temporal visit-

[e] Deut. viii. 2.

ations a pattern of the fatherly chastening from which no true son is exempt, in their final victory and fruition of Canaan a type of the heavenly rest that remaineth for the people of God. This is no fanciful system of accommodation; we have inspired authority for thus reading the Old Testament Scriptures. The use which our Lord makes of the elevation of the brasen serpent[f], and of the manna in the wilderness[g], and which St. Paul makes of another interesting occurrence, the water from the rock at Horeb[h], is familiar to all; and that these are but specimens from the quarry we may gather from the general declaration of the Apostle, that "these things happened" unto the Jews "for ensamples," rather types or models (*τύποι*), "and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come[i]." Studied with this light thrown upon it, the early history of the Israelites becomes an inexhaustible source of instruction, warning, and consolation; and the conviction arises in the mind of the believer, that so apt a reflection of the Christian life, in its various aspects, cannot be a casual coincidence; in other words, that the Divine wisdom shaped the history of the chosen people, as well as the appointments of the Law, with a special reference to the future dispensation of Christ.

In like manner the Jewish privileges, variously

[f] John iii. 14. [g] John vi. 49, 50. [h] 1 Cor. x. 4.
[i] 1 Cor. x. 11.

expressed in the terms just now alluded to, find their counterpart under our dispensation, but in a deeper, and a more spiritual, sense. The external relations of the Law give place to the inward ones of the Gospel. Christians are elected, and called; they are sons of God by adoption; they are a holy nation, a peculiar people; but these terms, as applied to Christians, as much transcend, in their idea, what they signified under the Law, as the religion of Christ is superior to that of Moses. And I cannot but observe, that inattention to this distinction has not unfrequently exercised an injurious influence on the interpretation of the New Testament in this particular point. Hence has proceeded the tendency to lower the meaning of the terms in question, so as to make them signify something entirely separable from a work of the Spirit on the heart; as when it is argued, that St. Paul, in speaking of Christians "as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world," meant only an election of particular nations, the English nation for example, to the profession of Christianity, because the Jewish election was, in fact, a national one[k]; or that the words "called" and "saints," as used by the same Apostle, signify, respectively, only an external calling by the word, and an external dedication to God, such as equally belonged to the vessels of the tabernacle. Nor can we think that those

[k] See Locke on Romans ix. and Ephes. i. 1—6.

expositors have fully unfolded the sense of Scripture, who, rising above the school of Locke and Grotius, yet interpret these expressions to mean merely an admission to ecclesiastical privileges, to the offer of salvation[l], by which, I presume, is meant admission to the means of grace and a claim to the influences of the Spirit, privileges which, however valuable, by no means imply vital, saving, union with Christ. That many passages, at least, such as those in the Epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul connects election and calling directly with justification and the foretaste of glory[m], and where he declares, that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God[n]," cannot, without straining, be so reduced in import, seems clear; but let me briefly point out what I conceive to be the fundamental error of this type of exposition.

The usage of Scripture then seems to furnish us with the following canon of interpretation;—the Theocratical nation is spoken of as the type, or figure, not of local Christian churches, such as that of Rome, or Ephesus, but of the one true church, or, as it is called in Protestant theology, perhaps somewhat improperly, the invisible church, the mystical body of Christ, which in our Prayer-book is defined to be "the blessed company of all faithful," or truly believing, "peo-

[l] See Whately, Essays on St. Paul, Essay on Election.
[m] Rom. viii. 29, 30. [n] Ibid. v. 14.

ple[o]." This is the heavenly Zion, the spiritual Israel, of which the Jewish Theocracy, with its temple, and its appointments of sacrifice and priesthood, was the earthly counterpart. There could be but one temple, the centre of unity to the nation, and so there is but one mystical body under its Head, Christ. And as the members of the church under this its inward, its true aspect, are also, all of them, living members of Christ, vitally incorporated in Him, as the branches in the vine, and under the influence of His Spirit, you will at once perceive that the Theocratical relations under consideration assume, in the Christian application, a deeper meaning than that which has been assigned to them. The Jewish election, and calling, and adoption, it has been observed[p], belonged to the whole nation without exception; in the Pentateuch it is almost always the nation collectively that is addressed: true, most true: and so under the Gospel, while these privileges belong, in their spiritual fulness, only to the true church, they belong to every member of it without exception. And now follow out the parallel. The nation was not merely invited to leave Egypt, but was drawn out of it by a mighty hand and stretched out arm, so the members of the mystical body are called not merely by the word, but by the Spirit working with the word; the nation was

[o] Communion Service.

[p] Whately, Essay on Election.

elected, not merely to the offer of Canaan, but to an actual fruition of the land of promise, so Christians are elected not merely to the means of grace, but to the actual fruition of Gospel blessings, cleansing by the blood of Christ, sanctification by His Spirit, fellowship with God, the foretaste of glory; the nation as such was adopted, "Israel is my son, my first-born[q]," the privilege being not the less real because it was external, so Christians receive not merely the title of sons, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father[r]; "the Spirit itself bears witness with" their "spirit that" they "are the children of God[s];" they "are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession[t]." Yet in the

[q] Exod. iv. 22. [r] Rom. viii. 15. [s] Ibid. v. 16.

[t] Ephes. i. 13. If the reader is disposed to pursue the analogy, and to argue that as the Jewish nation, notwithstanding its election and calling, was eventually, for its sins, expelled from Canaan, so a state of vital union with Christ is not indefectible, he is at liberty to do so; the Author is not concerned in maintaining in its integrity any particular scheme of doctrine, but only in shewing that the expressions in debate imply, when applied to Christians, not merely an external privilege, but a fruition of the blessing. It must be observed, however, in reference to the point just mentioned, that whereas the covenant of Sinai was made with the people themselves, the Christian covenant is founded in Christ, (hence the expression, "chosen in Christ,") and therefore may be supposed to possess a guarantee for its performance which did not belong to its predecessor. For further remarks on this subject, see Note in the Appendix.

application of these terms to the Theocracy, the groundwork was laid for their higher, their Christian, meaning; the earthly served to prepare the way for the spiritual; Israel after the flesh to shadow forth the true Israel; and in this point as in others the Jew, in becoming a Christian, found himself surrounded with old and familiar ideas, and only exchanged the earthly figure for the heavenly reality.

Such are the points of view under which I thought it might be interesting to us to consider the Theocracy; in the prosecution of which design I fear I have trespassed too long on your attention. Let me briefly sum them up: the Jewish polity was in its structure so framed as, in the first place, to fence off a consecrated spot, where, by being bound up with a national constitution, the knowledge and worship of the one true God might be preserved; secondly, to operate, in the infancy of religion, as a school of discipline, working, after the manner of educational systems, from without inwards; and lastly, to exhibit an earthly counterpart of the inner Theocracy, the Theocracy of the Spirit, which, after redemption had been accomplished, was to be established in the world. Traces of adaptation, of wise contrivance, of prospective aims, are, I think, clearly visible in the institution; and, so far as they are so, aid in deepening our convictions of its divine origin. These convictions

will gain in strength, as the constituent elements of the Legal system are found to bear the same marks of a presiding intelligence. Some of these I hope to bring before you in the following discourse. Meanwhile, let me dismiss you with the prayer, that the privileges which as Christians we enjoy may be realised in our experience, and influence our practice, more and more; that we may remember, that if we are chosen in Christ, it is that we may be holy, and without blame before Him in love; if called of God, it is that we should take up our cross and follow Christ; if sons of God by adoption and grace, it is that we may be transformed into the image of the First-Begotten, and so into a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

LECTURE III.

HEBREWS x. 11.

And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

HITHERTO it is the structure of the Theocracy as a whole; the fundamental principles on which, in its political, disciplinary, and typical character, it is based; to which our attention has been directed: we are now, in accordance with what was said at the close of the preceding Lecture, to pass on to the consideration of the constituent elements of this system, the appointments which it comprised, without some acquaintance with which it is impossible to form an adequate idea of the manifold influences brought to bear upon the Jew to prepare him for his future destination. Of these, the two principal are the ceremonial law, and the institution of prophecy; both of them preparatory to the Gospel, though in different ways; the one by embodying, under sensible forms, the ideas peculiar to the Christian dispensation; the other

by direct information, varying in amount and clearness in different ages, respecting the person and work of the promised Saviour. The former of these subjects I propose now to enter upon, while I endeavour to illustrate some of the principal of the Levitical appointments, as well in their use in the religion of Moses of which they formed a part, as in their prospective references to the Christian scheme.

I have said, some of the principal of these appointments; for here an almost boundless field presents itself, to traverse which, in the brief compass of time at our command, would be impossible. Adopting the usual fourfold division, we should have to dwell successively on the sacred places, the sacred seasons, the sacred rites, and the sacred persons, of the Law; and as each of these topics comprises under it many subordinate particulars, it is obvious that our choice lies between a superficial, and therefore uninteresting, survey, and a selection of one or two points, which seem to be of primary importance, for more extended examination. Let me remind my hearers, that the latter is in general the plan of these discourses, which by no means profess to deal with their subject in all its details, but rather to concentrate attention on the salient points of agreement or of contrast between the Law and the Gospel. I make no apology therefore for at present confining myself to some remarks on the

Levitical sacrificial system, under its two main divisions of priesthood and sacrifice, with their corresponding facts under the Gospel; a subject which, both from its intrinsic gravity, and from the circumstances of the times, appears to call for a more particular discussion. Hereafter an opportunity will be afforded for examining some of the typical relations of the temple, and the temple services[a]. In the present discourse, I propose to consider the appointments of priesthood and sacrifice simply as parts of the Mosaic religion; in the following one, the Christian fulfilment of them as types will engage our attention. And perhaps if we inquire successively into the import, and the efficacy, of the Mosaic appointments in question, no essential point will be left unnoticed.

I. I proceed to consider the import of priesthood and sacrifice as elements of the Levitical worship. But at the threshold we may be met by the question, what import can they, or any other parts of the Mosaic ritual, have, save a typical one? Their use was to point to Christ, and here it terminated. Inasmuch then as it is the Christian Scriptures which disclose the typical application, the ceremonial law was given chiefly for our instruction, and the Jew was simply the keeper of a casket which he could not unlock, an actor in a symbolical representation which to him conveyed little or no meaning. Such, or some-

[a] See Lecture VII. on the Synagogue.

thing like it, is, in fact, the conclusion to which some eminent writers have been conducted; and one in particular, whose name always deserves to be mentioned with respect in this place, but whose reasonings must on some points be read with caution, has, in his work on Prophecy, and in that on Sacrifice, strongly impressed upon us the reserve which the Law maintains respecting the meaning of its own ordinances, and the consequent state of ignorance in which the Jewish worshipper must on this point have been involved[b].

It could not, in truth, escape the notice of so acute a reasoner, that some of the popular notions on the amount of insight which the Jew possessed into the import of his ritual are open to grave objections. Confining the use of the Law to its typical references, the older writers on the Typology of Scripture, in their natural desire to rescue the legal rites from the insignificance of dumb elements, were tempted to suppose that the Jew, even in the earliest period of his history, clearly discerned the prophetical import of his ritual worship; that when, for example, he brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle, and there slew it, he was exercising a real, though prospective, act of faith in the Redeemer, whose person he foresaw, and whose work of atonement he understood, and

[b] Davison, on Prophecy, p. 139—150. Primitive Sacrifice, p. 89.

relied upon in anticipation[c]. I need not further describe a mode of interpretation, which must be familiar to all who have looked into our popular treatises on this subject, nor need I, after what was said in the preceding Lecture, point out the inherent weakness under which it labours. It is in fact an illusion arising from our transferring the knowledge which *we* possess to an earlier period in the course of progressive revelation, to the detriment of the symmetry of divine truth, and of the cause itself of truth. Of the prophetic meaning of the types no hint is given in the Law, and it is not for us to intrude our tapers where the light from heaven fails us. Moreover, as the writer just mentioned has observed, a type with its prophetic import unfolded would amount to a full exposition of the doctrine, and thus nothing would have been left for the last and most perfect revelation of God to make known; Judaism would have been, not preparatory to Christianity, but Christianity itself[d].

Against the inversion of the natural order of things which would transfer the Jew into the position of the Christian, this reasoning seems decisive; and yet there is something cheerless and unsatisfactory in the state in which the argument is thus left. It is a mortification to our Christian

[c] See the examples given by Mr. Davison from the writings of Bochart and Lamy, Primitive Sacrifice, p. 164.

[d] Davison, on Prophecy, p. 140.

sympathies to suppose that the Levitical rites were incorporated in the national worship as utterly mute symbols, serving indeed to us as a prophetic evidence of our faith, but containing no positive use of instruction to the ancient believer. Or shall we limit their use to the desire which they were calculated to awaken in the worshipper of a better atonement, as their insufficiency became, from his growing spiritual perceptions, more deeply felt? Surely this seems too narrow a view to take of the operation of the ancient economy, which, it should be remembered, was not only one great type of the future kingdom of Christ, but was a religion to those who lived under it, a present revelation, however imperfect, which had its present use. Let the parallel case of prophecy be considered. Prophecy, far from being a mere series of predictions, contains didactic matter of the greatest importance, and of present use to those to whom it was addressed; the prophet was not only an inspired seer of future events, but a teacher of righteousness to his own generation[e]. And shall we deny a similar double purpose to the other great branch of the Mosaic institutions, the ceremonial law? It seems hardly consistent with our best notions respecting a system of divine origin to suppose that it would be content with a ritual of dumb show, or condemn its members to the perfunctory discharge of ceremonial duties

[e] Davison, on Prophecy, Discourse ii.

which to them conveyed no spiritual instruction. Such certainly was not the idea entertained by the pious Hebrew respecting his own ordinances, when he described the godly man as one whose "delight" was "in the law of the Lord," as one who meditated therein "day and night[f];" or when he prayed, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy law[g]." Nor indeed would the Mosaic dispensation have been properly a preparation for the Christian, unless it had, not merely prefigured the facts, but expressed the ideas, which belong to the latter: we have seen how this was the case with the Theocracy as a polity, in which the relations of the chosen people to Jehovah, though but typical, were, after their manner, real; and why should not the principle be extended to the ceremonial law? Physiologists will tell us, that the structure of the lower animals contains, in rudiment, every organ which, in its perfection, is found in the frame of man.

The fact is, that both the defenders and the opponents of the system which attributes to the Jew a knowledge of the Gospel facts to which his ritual pointed, have been somewhat embarrassed by the assumption on which they seem to have gone, that the Law was exclusively typical in character, forgetting that it was also symbolical. The distinction here intimated is so important,

[f] Ps. i. 2. [g] Ps. cxix. 18.

that I may be permitted to explain it a little more fully[h]. Every true type then is necessarily a symbol, that is, it embodies and represents the ideas which find their fulfilment in the antitype; but every symbol is not necessarily a type; a symbol may terminate in itself, and point to nothing future; it may even refer to something past. The difference between the two will become evident, if we consider, that the learned researches of modern times have made it more than probable that the religions of antiquity were all symbolical in character, or so framed as to convey under sensible images the ideas on which they were respectively based[i]; but no one would think of calling the rites of heathenism types: they were a species of acted hieroglyphics, which

[h] The purely symbolical import of the Mosaic ritual, a department of Biblical criticism almost unknown in this country, has been unfolded with great learning and sagacity by Bähr, in his Symbolik des Mosaischen cultus; an interesting work, though unhappily, from the author's antipathy to what he calls the "forensic" view of sacrifice,—the view, that is, which connects with that rite the ideas of punishment and of substitution,—by no means a safe guide on all points. Together with Bähr's Observations on the Mosaic Sacrifices should be read, Kurtz, Das Mosaische Opfer; Abp. Magee's work, especially Dissertations, 38, and 39; Outram, De Sac. Diss. i. c. 21, 22; and Fairbairn, Typology, vol. ii. c. 3. §. 4. Bähr's work, however, with all its defects, is a very valuable one; and in this Lecture the Author has been much indebted to it.

[i] See Creuzer's great work Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker.

reached the understanding through the senses, and here their use terminated. A type is a prophetic symbol; and since prophecy is the prerogative of Him who sees the end from the beginning, a real type, implying as it does a knowledge of the reality, can only proceed from God. Whether the Mosaic ordinances of religion, as they were undoubtedly symbolical, were also all typical, may admit of difference of opinion; it certainly seems a narrow view to confine the types of the Old Testament to those expressly mentioned as such in the New[k]; but even in those appointments which we know, on inspired authority, to have been typical, we can, mentally at least, separate the symbol from the type, and consider the former by itself.

Now to the understanding of the Mosaic ritual, considered as a system of symbols, it was by no means so necessary that an explanation should have been added, as it was to the reading of its meaning as a system of types. We must not measure the effect of such representations in ancient times and among eastern nations by our more abstract and intellectual modes of communication. To us the language of symbolism is, except so far as nature prompts it, a strange language; to eastern antiquity nothing was more familiar. Symbolical actions, sometimes with an

[k] See Bishop Marsh, Lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible, Lect. VI.

explanation, sometimes sufficiently explaining themselves, conveyed to the eastern mind, untutored to reflection, a liveliness of impression which no words could impart; and thus symbolism became in those regions a kind of science, cultivated by the few, understood, to some extent, by all. I need not remind my hearers how often this mode of instruction is employed in the Old Testament in other cases than the particular one before us. Isaiah walks three years naked and barefoot, as a sign against Egypt[l]; Jeremiah puts yokes and bonds round his neck, and then sends them to the neighbouring kings in token of their approaching subjugation by Nebuchadnezzar[m]; Ezekiel erects a mimic siege against Jerusalem, and through an aperture in the wall of his house removes his household goods in the sight of the people[n], to intimate to them their impending captivity[o]. It is true that in these instances, together with the symbol, the interpretation was given; but even had it not, they would, to the attentive observer, have conveyed their own meaning. Let us suppose a similar measure of devout curiosity on the part of the Jew, with some enlightened perceptions on the subject of religion,

[l] Isaiah xx. [m] Jerem. xxvii. [n] Ezek. iv. and xii.

[o] Better examples of purely symbolical actions would, perhaps, have been the boring of the ear of the servant who should refuse his freedom, Exod. xxi. 6; and the washing of hands by the elders at the expiation of an uncertain murder, Deut. xxi. 6.

and it is hardly possible not to think that the striking symbolism of his Law must have been understood, not so much as prefiguring Christian facts, as presenting ideas to be afterwards realized in Christianity. I would refer to the expressions of David as illustrative of the point in hand. "Purge me with hyssop," he prays in Psalm li. "and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." It is plain from this passage that the Levitical sacrifices had conveyed to the Psalmist no clear instruction respecting the great Christian sacrifice, for in this case he would surely have pleaded *its* efficacy, as supplying the desired atonement which he could not find in the Law; and yet it seems equally plain that the symbols of that Law had not spoken to him in vain; they had suggested the idea of atonement, and the expectation of a sacrifice to cleanse from presumptuous sin, founded on the same principles as the Levitical, but superior in power. I may observe too, that had a key to the symbols of the Law been furnished by Moses, one object of this whole method of teaching, viz. to draw attention to the inspired record, would have been frustrated. The devout inquirer would feel his interest and his curiosity excited by the sacred hieroglyphics of Moses, dimly intimating, but not openly declaring, their import; the sacred volume would become an object of diligent study and meditation, just as the Apocalypse is to us; advantages which,

it is obvious, would have been lost, had any formal explanation been appended to the symbol. For the same reason our Lord spake in parables: by the careless the meaning was missed; the serious and attentive had their curiosity awakened, and eventually rewarded.

If the foregoing observations be well-grounded, we shall neither ascribe to the pious Jew a distinct recognition in his sacrifices of the atoning work of Christ, a supposition burdened with many difficulties; nor, on the other hand, a mere mechanical performance of a dumb ceremonial; but we shall suppose, that while the typical import of his ritual was, for the wisest purposes, veiled from him until He came in whom the Law found its fulfilment,—as a system of symbols, of representation by action, as Warburton calls it[p], it was a vehicle of religious instruction wherever it encountered suitable dispositions of mind. And I have dwelt the more fully on the subject, both because some aid may thereby be furnished towards the solution of the difficult question, how far the Jew understood his own ritual, and because the point of view from which in this discourse we are contemplating the Levitical appointments will be the better perceived[q].

[p] Div. Leg. b. iv. §. 4.

[q] The above observations must be understood as applying to the ceremonial law, considered by itself and apart from prophecy. The law, however expressive as a system of

We are to conceive then that the New Testament had never been written, or had perished, and to endeavour to gather the leading ideas which either from its mute symbolism, or from hints contained in the Law, (for on the *symbolical* meaning of its own ordinances the Law is not altogether silent), the Levitical sacrificial system seems to embody.

The general import of this system is best gathered from the chief ends of the Theocracy itself; for, as has been well observed, what the latter was as a whole, the Levitical appointments in question were in particular[r]; in these the design of the whole economy appears in a concentrated form. Now from the passages adduced in the preceding discourse we learn, that the separation of the Israelites took place in order that they might be a holy nation, consecrated to the special service of God: "The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people,—that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God." But the holiness of the creature can only be a derivative one, it is an emanation from the absolute source of holiness; it implies therefore an existing connexion, or fellowship, with God.

symbols, contains no hint of its typical import. But, as will be shewn hereafter (Lecture VI.), the effect of the law and prophecy combined must have been such as almost to force the typical reference on the observation of the inquirer.

[r] Bähr, Symbolik des Mos. Cult. vol. ii. p. 190.

In the case of the fallen creature this fellowship has been interrupted; here then its restoration, as in the upright creature its maintenance, is the problem, and the difficulty. In the first place, God must stoop to connect Himself with the wandering outcast, must take the initiative in the work of reconciliation; for since the day that our first parents hid themselves among the trees of the garden, guilt shuns the Divine Presence, and prefers darkness to light. In the next place, the true character of God, and the true condition of man, must suffer no obscuration in the process; this were to film over the disease, not to cure it: the heathen religions could never be ethical, could never be training schools of piety, because in them neither was the absolute holiness of God, nor the sinfulness of man, inculcated as first principles of religion. True religion then, whether it appear clothed in the preparatory symbolism of the Law, or in its more perfect form under the Gospel, must exhibit in strong relief the truths, that sin has made a separation between God and man, and that, though reconciliation is not hopeless, the means of repairing the breach must proceed not from the creature, but from the Creator.

How strongly these lessons were impressed under the Mosaic economy we all know; indeed it is the predominance of its ethical character that distinguishes this religion from all others of antiquity. The God who, in such a concrete form,

presented Himself to the Hebrew as a Person not an influence, as Spirit not matter, as the sole object of worship, not one of the Lords many and Gods many of heathenism, is the absolutely Holy One; "ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy[s]." He connects Himself by covenant with a certain people, takes up His abode among them, reveals Himself to them, makes them, in short, as distinguished from other nations, a kingdom of priests[t], of those, that is, to whom a peculiar privilege of nearness to the Divine Presence is vouchsafed. But this favoured people is not allowed to forget, that it is in no way exempt from the sinfulness, original and actual, which is the common inheritance of the race; on the contrary, the conviction of this painful truth is in an especial manner impressed on the Jewish mind. If the principle of the Mosaic polity was to work from without inwards, the import of all its ordinances was, the unfitness of man in his natural state to appear before a holy God. To such an extent was this symbolically inculcated, that natural conditions of the body, natural in its fallen state, became theocratical disqualifications, and excluded from the camp of Israel. Birth, death, and the connecting link between the two, sickness, in its highest form of leprosy, were all to the Jew associated with sin; by natural generation sinful beings are propagated, sickness and

[s] Levit. xix. 2. [t] Exod. xix. 6.

death are the consequences of sin; all therefore communicated ceremonial uncleanness, which could only be removed by appointed rites of purification[u].

These ideas, which pervade the whole of the ceremonial law, find their culmination in the institutions which we are more immediately considering. God dwells among His chosen people; but even this kingdom of priests cannot approach the Divine Majesty, save through the intervention of persons set apart for that office; nor can they offer acceptable worship, without being first purged from their natural uncleanness, whether general, or arising from particular transgressions. Even the inanimate instruments of divine worship, the tabernacle, the altar, the holy place, the garments of the sacred persons, are, on account of their connexion and contact with the people, regarded as unclean, and as needing to be purified to fit them for holy uses. The mediating persons are priests; the cleansing ceremony is sacrifice.

The Levitical priesthood does not differ essentially from the same institution as it meets us in other religions of antiquity, In all religions we find priesthood, as we do sacrifices, and in all it has sprung from the same feeling. Together with the idea of God, however rude and imperfect, arises the consciousness of the infinite distance between man and God, and a desire to fill up the interval with an intermediate order, which, con-

[u] Levit. xii. Numb. xix. Levit. xiv.

nected on the one hand with the worshipper, and on the other with the Being worshipped, may serve as a means of communication between them: to persons thus invested with an official sanctity, it was felt to be a relief to delegate those acts of religious homage which the worshipper himself shrank from performing. And in order to confer permanency on the institution, to raise it as much as possible above the fluctuations of human caprice, the principle of caste was adopted; that is, the priestly function was attached to a certain tribe or family, and it was made to pass from father to son by natural descent, irrespectively of moral or intellectual qualifications.

On these principles the Jewish priesthood was instituted. The tribe of Levi was set apart to the ministry of the tabernacle; out of it the family of Aaron to sacerdotal functions; and again out of this family the high priest to the highest offices connected with his calling. Whatever in the human institution was true in sentiment, whatever expressed a real want of human nature, is found incorporated in the Jewish law; while the corruptions which grew up round the former are here effectually obviated. For, with all their identity in principle, very considerable are the differences between the Mosaic priesthood and that of any heathen nation whose history is known. In the first place, under the Jewish economy the priests were not the depositaries of any system of

esoteric doctrine, any mysteries, the knowledge of which was to be withheld from the people; while the contrary was a characteristic feature of the priesthoods of heathenism. In the countries in which the sacerdotal order was strongly defined, as in Egypt, India, and, in a less degree, ancient Italy, a secret lore, sacred books[x], existed, which were carefully hidden from the public gaze, and the study of which was considered the exclusive prerogative of the priestly caste; so much as the priests chose to communicate might be known, but no more. This corrupt principle, one of the plague-spots of the papal system, indicative of deep disease within, could find no place under the Mosaic polity, where priests and people had an equal right in the national code, and were equally bound by its regulations. If the tribe of Levi was set apart for the peculiar study of the Law, it was only that through its means the knowledge of it might be more widely diffused throughout the people. "When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this Law before all Israel in their hearing[y];" by the letter, and still more by the

[x] e. g. the Sibylline books of Rome. The reluctance of Herodotus to disclose the sacred legends of the Egyptian priests is known to the readers of that historian. See b. ii. By the Brahminical law, boiling oil is to be poured on the neck of those who usurp the priestly prerogative of reading the sacred books. Ritter, quoted by Bähr, ii. p. 28.

[y] Deut. xxxi. 11.

spirit, of such an injunction as this, the growth of that species of spiritual despotism which affects the exclusive knowledge of divine mysteries was effectually checked. Equally distinctive of the Jewish priesthood was the idea of representation which it embodied, a very important point in connexion with the typical application. Although the line of demarcation between the sacred order and the rest of the nation was strongly marked by natural descent, the distinction was relative, not absolute, for Israel was a kingdom of priests; the Levitical priesthood was the representative, the efflorescence, of the priestly nation. The very same prerogatives which belonged to the sacerdotal order, belonged also, though in a less intensive degree, to the nation; as may be seen in the description of a priest given by Moses in the book of Numbers, where, in reference to the rebellion of Korah, he tells the people, that "to-morrow the Lord will shew who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him; even him whom He hath chosen will He cause to come near unto Him[z];" election, consecration, nearness to God, here mentioned as sacerdotal, were also, as we know, theocratical privileges. It was in the high priest, in whom the sacerdotal office appeared in its perfection, that the representative function was also most prominent. On his breast the names of the twelve

[z] Numb. xvi. 5.

tribes were borne[a]; his sin was imputed to the people[b], and he, in turn, bore their iniquities, and in their name and stead made atonement for them[c]. With him the nation was identified; and felt itself ennobled by the dignity and privileges which he enjoyed. Thus, while by the necessary intervention of the priesthood the ideas of God's holiness and man's sinfulness were maintained in vigour, no social degradation of the people as compared with the priests, such as we find in the Indian system of caste, could consistently with the principles of the Mosaic law take place.

It would be improper here not to glance for a moment at the ethical character of the Levitical priesthood, a quality which it shares with the whole of the economy of which it was a part. They who were to approach the Divine Presence must be holy; and though, as became a symbolical religion, this requirement was sensibly set forth by the necessity of bodily integrity, by the rites of consecration, by the sacred garments and the holy oil, moral purity was the thing signified, as appears from the transfer of the Pontifical dignity from one branch of Aaron's family to another, on account of the crimes by which the office, in the persons of its original possessors, had been stained[d]. In this point also the Mosaic institution presents a contrast to the corresponding

[a] Exod. xxviii. 29. [b] Levit. iv. 3. [c] Ibid. xvi. 21.
[d] 1 Sam. ii. 35.

one of heathenism; for although the idea of the necessity of sanctity in those who would act as mediators between God and man was never wholly lost, compared with the prominence given to it in the Mosaic law, it almost disappears from view. Freedom from bodily defect we find every where a necessary qualification for the priesthood[e]; but who can associate any pure moral ideas with the abominations of which in Egypt, Greece, and Rome, priests and priestesses were the willing ministers?

But let us now proceed to the kindred institution of sacrifice. Into the disputed question concerning the origin of this rite it is not necessary to enter: great names are here arrayed on both sides[f], and although the evidence seems, on the whole, in favour of the supposition, that this mode of worship commenced under divine sanction, yet, since Scripture does not in express terms decide the point, a difference of opinion is allowable. With the decision of the question we have no immediate concern; for, whether sacrifice is, in the law of Moses, merely recognised as an existing ordinance, or instituted for the first time, as it

[e] Sacerdos integer sit, was a maxim of the Roman law. With the Greeks, as is well known, beauty of person was prized as a qualification for the priesthood.

[f] Spencer, Warburton, and Davison, incline to the human origin; the Fathers generally take the same side. Magee and Faber strongly espouse the opposite opinion. Outram leaves the question undetermined. For further remarks, see Note in the Appendix.

meets us there, in its expiatory form, it is confessedly of divine appointment.

The leading idea of the Levitical sacrifices has already been pointed out. The priestly nation enjoyed, through its formal priesthood, a covenanted privilege of access to God; but sin, cleaving to the worshipper, renders him unclean, and therefore unfit for the Divine Presence; by sacrifice the disqualification is removed. The effect of sacrifice is usually described by the word "atonement," literally, the covering of sin from the eye of God. Both as regards the nation in its collective capacity, and individuals belonging to it, this cleansing process was necessary. At the original dedication of the covenant, the whole people were sprinkled with blood[g], by which ceremony they were symbolically purged from pollution, and fitted for intercourse with their heavenly King: but since, from the weakness of the instrument, this was but a temporary purification, and the nation, in the lapse of time, contracted fresh uncleanness, an annual day of general expiation was instituted, on which by solemn sacrifices the covenant was renewed, and the people consecrated afresh to the service of Jehovah[h]. The same idea pervades all the offerings commanded, or permitted by the Law, in the case of individuals. By these which under the ancient economy formed the only authorized mode of worship, the sentiments of

[g] Exod. xxiv. 8. [h] Levit. xvi.

piety, in its various forms, were expressed. The burnt-offering, the most ancient and most extensive in its import of all, consumed wholly on the altar, represented the general conviction of sinfulness which was part of the religion of the pious Jew, and the felt duty of a complete surrender of all the powers and faculties to God, who, notwithstanding the imperfections of his servant, continued to him the privileges of the covenant. In the peace, or thank, offering, under its various forms[i], the feeling of sin is expressed in connexion with particular mercies, vouchsafed by, or expected from, God; in accordance with a deep and true sentiment pervading both the Old and the New Testament, that the loving-kindness of God, not less, perhaps more, than His rod of chastisement, awakens in the true Israelite a sense of his own unworthiness[k]. In this species of sacrifice, after atonement is made, man is seen in the enjoyment of perfect fellowship with God; he sits at God's table, he is placed, for the time being, on a level with the priests, and with them partakes of the divine bounty[l]. The sin, and the trespass, offering[m] had reference to particular sins, by which, though committed inadvertently—(for wilful transgression no atonement

[i] These were three in number; viz. a thanksgiving offering, an offering made in performance of a vow, and a voluntary offering. See Levit. vii. 12, 16.

[k] Is. xxxviii. 15. Ezek. xvi. 63. Rom. ii. 4.

[l] Levit. vii. 15, 16. [m] Levit. iv. 1—3. vi. 1—5.

was provided,)—fellowship with God had been interrupted, and by sacrificial cleansing must be restored. But to all the atoning property belongs; in all the victim is slain, the blood is sprinkled by the priest; and only after this preliminary process, by which the person of the offerer was rendered acceptable, is communion with God enjoyed or recovered. The Mosaic sacrifices were, one and all, expiatory; a circumstance which deserves notice, as this quality has sometimes been confined to those in which the idea of sin and its forgiveness is particularly prominent, as the sin, trespass, and burnt, offerings. But the meat offerings were either a substitution for, or an adjunct of, the animal sacrifices[n]; and as regards the peace offerings, though from the omission of the usual phrase denoting their atoning power, and from their general character, we might be tempted to think otherwise, yet, the laying of the hand upon the victim and the sprinkling of the blood around the altar by the priest stamp them as not less really, though perhaps less prominently, piacular than the rest[o].

But let us endeavour to gain some more precise notions on the subject. The Law, as I have before observed, though silent on the prophetical, is not so on the symbolical, import of its own ordinances, especially that of sacrifice. "The life of the flesh is in the blood," we read in Leviticus xvii. "and

[n] Numb. xv. 1—15. Levit. v. 11. [o] See Levit. iii. 13.

I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that maketh atonement for" (rather "by") "the soul[p]." This passage deserves to be attentively considered, for it introduces us to the central ideas on which the Levitical rite of sacrifice is based, and from which it derives its distinctive characteristics.

Observe then, in the first place, that, as we should have expected[q], God Himself appears as the Author and Giver of the atoning ordinance; a capital point of distinction between the Mosaic and the heathen sacrifices. In the latter, the worshipper aimed at appeasing the wrath of an offended Deity; the sacrifice was supposed to effect a change in the disposition of the superior power, who was either bribed, or propitiated, into a milder temper; and in all cases the first movement towards reconciliation proceeded from man. With the Mosaic offerings it was exactly the reverse. "*I* have given it to you to make atonement for you," is the declaration of Jehovah. Man appears inadequate to the task of devising means whereby sin may be covered; in this emergency God interposes, provides an ordinance which, from His positive appointment, assumes a sacramental character, and Himself,

[p] Levit. xvii. 11. בַּנֶּפֶשׁ, as Bähr remarks, ii. p. 207, can only signify "by means of the soul" (of the animal), not as our version has it, "for your souls," in which rendering our translators seem to have followed the Sept. ἀντὶ ψυχῆς.

[q] See page 88.

through His representative the priest, and by means of the atoning blood, removes what is displeasing in His sight, and what therefore had produced a separation between Him and the transgressor. The same idea is expressed in the word which we translate atonement, and which, as I have already remarked, is derived from a root signifying "to cover[r]." For it is obvious that such an expression never can be, as it never is, applied to God; in Him there is nothing that needs covering; the revelation of Himself and His attributes formed the groundwork of the Mosaic covenant. To suppose that God was rendered placable by sacrifice, would to the Hebrew be equivalent to supposing that some quality or attribute in Him needed to be covered, in other words removed, by the act; and so to introduce an idea foreign to the theology of the Old Testament, which knows nothing sinful or imperfect in the Divine Being. In the Mosaic atonements God appears as at once a Being of infinite holiness and of infinite love; towards sin His holiness assumes the form of righteous displeasure, but the sinful creature is an object of His love; means are provided whereby both attributes may be, not covered but, fully manifested, means whereby He may be seen at once shewing mercy, and yet not

[r] כָּפַר signifies to smear or cover; in Pihel it seems to be used only in the sense of atoning for; but the original meaning should not be lost sight of.

shewing it until sin is symbolically hidden from His sight. In short, God was never other than good and gracious to Israel, but an impediment existed to the unrestrained exhibition of His goodness, which in the prescribed act of sacrifice was removed. If we ask, why this particular instrument of atonement was adopted, why "almost all things were by the Law purged with blood[s]," the Gospel alone supplies the answer; this is one of the points that could never have been discovered from the Law itself.

Secondly, the passage which I have read seems to assert as plainly as words can do the vicarious nature of these sacrifices; so plainly, that it requires some ingenuity of reasoning to counteract the impression. The efficacy of the sacrifice is attributed especially to the blood; an idea which is also conveyed by the circumstance, that the sprinkling of the blood on or around the altar, not the slaying of the victim, was the peculiar function of the priests. The reason of this is given;—the life is in the blood. A life then, the life of the guiltless animal, was presented to God by the priest, and became, through the divine appointment, a covenanted means of cleansing from the pollution of sin. But what connexion is here traceable between means and end, unless we introduce the idea of substitution? Introduce it, and all becomes clear. The worshipper is a

[s] Heb. ix. 22.

transgressor; the penalty of the broken law is death; the death of the victim with the subsequent sprinkling of the blood exonerates from the penalty; what train of ideas can more clearly express the symbolical imputation of the offerer's sin, and its remission through the vicarious suffering and death of the victim? I do not insist upon the burning without the camp of the bodies of certain victims[t] supposed to have from this imputation contracted pollution, for the soundness of this interpretation of the circumstance is more than doubtful[u]; but I may well lay stress on the imposition of hands on the victim, both because

[t] Those, namely, whose blood was brought into the sanctuary. See the following note.

[u] See Bähr, ii. p. 397. who seems to have satisfactorily proved, that so far from the victims whose blood was brought into the sanctuary being unclean (by the imputation of sin), they, as exhibiting the sin-offering in its highest form, were peculiarly holy. Why then were they burnt without the camp, instead of being, like the other sacrifices of the same nature, eaten by the priests? The reason must be sought in the object of these sin-offerings, as compared with those of inferior power, which was, to make atonement either for the high priest's sin, as the representative of the nation, or for the sin of the whole congregation including the priests. See Levit. iv. 3. and 13. Levit. xvi. In these sacrifices therefore the priests appeared, not as priests, as mediators between the people and Jehovah, but as offerers, as themselves needing atonement, and accordingly as excluded from participation of the flesh of the victims. Under these circumstances, lest the holy flesh should, by being kept, see corruption, the whole carcase was, as the speediest mode of disposing of it, consumed in a clean place without the camp.

sins are expressly said to have been thus transferred to the live goat on the day of atonement[v], and because the import of this ceremony both in the Old and the New Testament is well known to have been, the communication of a property from one who possessed to one who lacked it[w].

Such are the leading ideas which seem to be embodied in the Levitical institution of sacrifice. If they have been correctly set forth, it will be obvious, that any such theories of this mode of worship as that it was a gift whereby man endeavoured to render his imperfect consecration of himself to God complete[x]; or that it was a symbol of the surrender of the soul to God to be made partaker of His holiness[y]; not to mention grosser conceptions, such as that of Spencer, who derives the Mosaic rites from an accommodation to the idolatrous practices of Egypt[z]; are, as applied at least to the Mosaic sacrifices, essentially defective: they throw into the background the ideas which in these sacrifices are most prominent, those of a broken law, of consequent guilt, of liability to punishment, and of forgiveness through vicarious suffering.

II. But what shall we say was the efficacy of the Mosaic atonements? What were the sins atoned

[v] Levit. xvi. 21.

[w] Josh. xxvii. 18—20. compared with Deut. xxxiv. 9.

[x] Tholuck. Heb. Brief. Beilage II.

[y] Bähr, ii. p. 210.

[z] De Leg. Heb. L. iii. Diss. ii.

for, and how far did the atonements extend? With some observations on this, the second point proposed for consideration, the present Lecture will be brought to a close.

Two opposite views have on this subject been propounded which invite our attention. By some it is supposed that the atonements in question had reference to all sin, moral[a] as well as ceremonial; and the language of some divines of strong Calvinistic tendencies seems even to imply, that the ancient believers enjoyed remission of sin in no less a degree than Christians do now[b]: others

[a] That is, all such moral sins as were not by the Law expressly excluded from the benefit of atonement; for since wilful sins which seemed to involve a spirit of rebellion against Jehovah, were to be punished by excision (see Numb. xv. 30.), no party can maintain that *all* sins were capable of atonement by the Mosaic sacrifices. It may conduce to the better understanding of this part of the Lecture to state briefly the points at issue. Presumptuous sins then being excluded, as incapable of atonement, the two questions on which the controversy turns are, 1. Did the atonements include all other sins, moral as well as ceremonial, or did they (with a few special exceptions) apply only to ceremonial? 2. If it be supposed that they did apply to all other sins, did the atonement consist merely in a restoration to Theocratical privileges, an external cleansing (Veysie, B. L. Lect. iii.); or had it a real effect on the spiritual state of the offerer as a sinner in the sight of God? As will be seen, the present writer adopts, in both cases, the latter view; but for a fuller discussion of the subject he refers to the Note in the Appendix. The reader will find an interesting Sermon on the subject by Dr. Hawkins, printed at the end of his work on the Historical Scriptures of the Old Testament. It leaves however some difficulties untouched.

[b] Witsius on Covenants, iii. p. 249.

conceive that all sin was indeed remitted by virtue of the sacrifices, but only for a limited period, as, for example, for the interval between one day of atonement and another. Those who adopt this view, under either modification, ground their opinion on the passages in the Old Testament, in which, without any limitation to ceremonial offences, sins are said to have been by the appointed offerings atoned for. And certainly some of these are as strong as can well be imagined. Take, for example, the expressions employed in describing the ceremonial of the great day of atonement. "And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat:—and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited[c]." And again, at the close: "This shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year[d]." To which may be added, that even in the case of the sin-offering, which bears more the character of having been appointed for particular ceremonial offences, it is said, "If a soul shall sin against *any* of the commandments of the Lord[e];" and that in the Epistle to the Hebrews there seems to be a kind of parallelism, as regards the kind of sins atoned for, drawn

[c] Levit. xvi. 21, 22. [d] Levit. xvi. 34. [e] Levit. iv. 2.

between the Jewish sacrifices and that of Christ; "such an High Priest became us, who needeth not daily to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did when He offered up Himself[f]."

This opinion is strongly opposed by others, to whom the Law appears to offer no general atonement for moral offences, and who insist on the repeated declarations in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the Levitical sacrifices could not take away sin, or relieve the conscience from a sense of guilt[g]. They observe too, that the ancient believers, David for example[h], long for a real atonement, which therefore they could not find in the Law, and that in the Apostolic comparisons between the Law and the Gospel the power of justification is expressly denied to the former[i]. The conclusion drawn is, that these sacrifices atoned only for ceremonial offences, and some few slighter cases of moral transgression specially excepted for particular reasons[k]; and that their efficacy was confined to the re-instatement of a member of the Theocracy in his earthly position, and in no way affected his relation towards God as the righteous Governor of the world[l].

[f] Heb. vii. 26, 27. [g] See Heb. ix. 9. x. 1—4.
[h] Psalm li. [i] Acts xiii. 39. [k] Levit. vi. 1—7.
[l] See Davison, Prim. Sac. p. 86—93. For a more extended examination of this writer's statements, which on both points, the range of offences to which the Mosaic atonements applied,

That to this latter end, the restoration of Theocratical privileges, the Mosaic atonements were, in those cases to which they applied, efficacious to the fullest extent, is undoubted; the offerer brought his victim, and by the sacrifice regained his standing as an Israelite. Moreover, it is easy to see why in some cases atonement was permitted, while it could not be extended to all offences. The Theocracy was a civil polity, with God as its supreme Magistrate. To the people placed under it a new law, civil and ceremonial, not to speak of the moral, most complicated in its enactments, was given; a law too which created sins that did not otherwise exist, as when natural bodily infirmities, leprosy, or contact with a dead body, are ranked among the things that needed an atoning sacrifice. To observe the law in these points with perfect exactness, was almost impossible; and therefore, as all admit, for mere ceremonial sins of ignorance, or of pardonable inadvertence, a remedy was provided by which the rigour of the law might be mitigated, while its integrity was maintained. But had the same indulgence been shewn towards grave moral transgressions; could the wilful murderer, the adulterer, the idolater, and in general the presumptuous transgressor, have escaped with impunity by offering an appointed sacrifice; it is plain that

and the efficacy of the atonements themselves, appear to the present author untenable, see Note in the Appendix.

the maintenance of the Theocracy, as a temporal polity, would have become impossible, and the structure would have fallen to pieces. It was only therefor for such sins as could be pardoned without injury to the interests of society, and for such as did not wear the aspect of rebellion against Jehovah, as the Head of the State, that atonements were permitted.

But it may admit of consideration, whether, in the case of moral transgressions not of presumptuous character, not less than in that of ceremonial offences which were sins only by the Law, a real atoning effect did not follow from the Mosaic sacrifices, those especially which were offered for sin in general, as the burnt-offering, and the expiations of the day of atonement; and whether it has not been too hastily assumed, that where there was not perfect atonement, there could have been no atonement at all. Perhaps the conflicting statements of Scripture will be reconciled, and the difficulties which beset either of the extreme views avoided, by recurring once more to the etymology of the word by which atonement is expressed. Let us say that all moral transgressions, save those to which the penalty of excision was attached, were covered, but none effectually obliterated, and we shall probably be not far from the truth[m].

[m] The writer would not be understood as laying much stress on the etymology of the word; this would be too

That the typical expiations of the Law could never procure the complete and final remission of moral guilt, is at once the dictate of reason and the doctrine of the New Testament; nor does the Old Testament say that they did so. What it affirms is, that sin was covered by these expiations; the sin remained, but its penal consequences were suspended; the debt was not really paid, but until it was so, a limited measure of liberty was allowed to the debtor. God forbore the immediate execution of the penalty, tolerated the existence of the sin, when, in obedience to His command, the prescribed sacrifices of atonement were offered; this seems the extent to which, under the old covenant, remission was granted. A view which is confirmed by a passage in the Epistle to the Romans, the meaning of which our translators have not expressed so happily as is their wont. "Whom," says the Apostle speaking of Christ, "God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, for a manifestation of His righteousness, on account of the passing over" (as indeed the margin has it) "of bye-gone sins," which passing over had its source "in the forbearance of God[n]." The sins of the ancient world were not visited upon it as they deserved; the sins of Israel were covered by a positive

slender a basis for argument. He refers to it rather as *illustrative* of the view set forth in the Lecture.

[n] Rom. iii. 25, 26.

institution, but of most inadequate virtue; lest then it should be supposed that God is indifferent to sin, lest this forbearance should be misconstrued, and so the attribute of the Divine righteousness be somewhat obscured, for this, among other reasons, Christ came, by an effectual propitiation to accomplish, what the blood of bulls and of goats could not do, the complete abolition of sin in its condemning power, and so to enable God to exhibit Himself as just, and yet the Justifier of him that believeth.

No violence then need be done to the plain statements of the Old Testament, that moral no less than ceremonial sin was, by the Levitical expiations, in some sense atoned for, nor to the equally plain statements of the New, that no sin was thereby efficaciously taken away. It was so far hidden from the eye of God as not to receive at once its just retribution, but it was not perfectly expiated; the handwriting of ordinances, concealed by the mercy-seat, still lay within, testifying against transgression, and claiming the blood of the transgressor. An inherent weakness of the Mosaic atonements which fully justifies the disparaging terms which, in comparison with the atoning work of Christ, the New Testament applies to them. For the difference, in truth, is immense between a mere suspension of punishment, and a complete satisfaction to offended justice; between a debt not demanded, and a

debt paid and cancelled. The conscience of the worshipper under the Law could never have been purged from guilt, for the light of nature would teach him that his sacrifices were ineffectual to this end, and the Law by its withholding the grant of plenary remission would but confirm the painful misgiving°. To obliterate completely and for

° The language used in reference to the sacrifices of the day of atonement may be thought to imply even more than the view above taken ascribes to them, and to have conveyed to the Israelite an assurance of complete remission. "On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord," Levit. xvi. 30. To the present writer it does not appear that much stress can be laid on the absence of a promise of forgiveness throughout this chapter, (see Dr. Hawkins's Sermon &c. p. 182.), for it seems difficult to draw a distinction between the promise of a cleansing from sin and of forgiveness (in the Old Testament sense); but there were two circumstances which must, it should seem, have impressed on the reflecting Israelite the inherent imperfection of these atonements: first, that the same phrase of atonement and cleansing was applied to the tabernacle and altar (v. 20.); and secondly, that the sacrifices were to be repeated annually. It is on this latter point that the Epistle to the Hebrews principally insists in its exposition of the inferiority of the Mosaic sacrifices to that of Christ. (See c. x. 1—14.) That the former should have possessed the real, though limited, efficacy, ascribed to them in the text, need occasion no difficulty to the Christian, who believes that the Mosaic atonements were constructed with a reference to Christ and His work, and therefore, from that connexion, may have been invested with a virtue not naturally belonging to them. To God the sacrifice of Christ was always present, and therefore in *His* sight, the Old Testament substitute for it

ever the condemning record, and for the spirit of bondage to impart the consciousness of forgiveness, is the prerogative of the greater sacrifice offered on Calvary, to which the legal appointments, as we believe, bore a typical reference, and the correspondence of which with its typical adumbration it will be my endeavour in the succeeding Lecture to demonstrate.

I conclude with one remark. We know what the general character of heathen sacrificial systems was; their cruelty, their frivolity, their unutterable pollutions. Some true and just ideas appear struggling for utterance under the superincumbent load of superstition and impurity. From the chief seat of these corruptions an infant people goes forth into the desert, and suddenly appears settled under a religious polity, which, while embodying the true and just utterances of human nature, is entirely exempt from the impurities of surrounding modes of worship. No human victims bleed on the Jewish altars; no vile debaucheries stain the tabernacle; no disgusting exhibitions defile the moral sense. Human priests and animal sacrifices indeed are there, because the religion is but pre-

possessed a real atoning power; to the Jew, to whom the typical relation was not revealed, or revealed imperfectly, his sacrifices must have appeared in every way defective, and could never have made the conscience perfect. But the atoning power of them was not made dependent on the amount of knowledge possessed by the offerer, but on the simplicity of his faith and obedience.

paratory; but the whole system proclaims the holiness of God, and the necessity of holiness in those who would worship Him. What explanation are we to give of so remarkable, so isolated, a phenomenon in the history of the world? If we suppose the Mosaic religion to be of divine origin, the fact is accounted for; to infidelity it must ever appear inexplicable.

LECTURE IV.

Heb. x. 12.

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.

To discover the symbolical import of the Mosaic sacrificial system it is not necessary to call in the aid of the New Testament; the Law, under this aspect, sufficiently declares its own meaning. We may, and I think should, conduct the interpretation of the Mosaic symbols on the same principles on which we should endeavour to unfold the ideas embodied in any other symbolical religion of antiquity; that is, dismissing from our view any ulterior, or typical, references, we should simply inquire what doctrines the religion aimed at representing under symbol to those by whom it was constructed, or upon whom it was imposed. We thus avoid any suspicion of introducing from the New Testament ideas which do not properly belong to the Old, of forcing the latter to speak a language which is really the language of the Gospel. Especially is this mode of treating the

subject necessary in controversy with the modern Jew; who, rejecting Christianity, takes from us the power of pressing him with interpretations of the Old Testament derived from the New, and throws us back on the reverse process, of first interpreting his own Scriptures from themselves and without extraneous aid, and then shewing that in Christ both Law and Prophets have been fulfilled.

You will remember that in the preceding Lecture such was the method pursued. Placing ourselves in the position of the Jew before the New Testament was written, or even prophecy had begun to unfold the distinctive features of the Redeemer's work, we endeavoured to interrogate the ceremonial law, in its appointments of priesthood and sacrifice, on the import of its symbolism; and found the principal ideas which it embodied to be, man's natural pollution in the sight of a holy God, the consequent separation between the two, the Divine mercy in making the first overtures to repair the breach, and the necessity of mediation and atonement as the means of reconciliation.

But however favourably the Mosaic system, in contrast with other contemporaneous religions, may come forth from these investigations, we cannot vindicate its divine origin solely on the ground of its superior ethical character, and apt expression of the spiritual wants of man. For however difficult it may be to account for the sudden appear-

ance of such a religion, amidst the abominations of surrounding modes of worship, this exemption from impurity will not of itself stamp it as divine; it may in this case have been, as a German writer expresses it, "the first of the ethnic religions, but still ethnic." The authentic signature of heaven is still wanting, viz. the prophetical character, the constructed reference to future events, which, if it can be satisfactorily established, proves, beyond all doubt, that the system in which it inheres is not from man but from God. For whatever unaided reason may effect, to deliver a real prophecy, to construct a real type, is confessedly beyond its power.

Admitting the divine origin of this religion, we shall find ourselves not the less embarrassed if we cannot point to a typical fulfilment of its appointments. For however high it may rank as a human production, as a divine institution it is so manifestly weak and rudimentary, that, if we are to hold that it was not preparatory to something higher and better than itself, we must abandon it to the sneers of the deist, and the less open, but not less dangerous, insinuations of the rationalist. Take the particular appointment on which we have been dwelling, that of sacrifice. Atonement, the expiation of sin, is the declared end of the Levitical sacrifices; yet the instrument of cleansing is the blood of bulls and goats, than which none can be conceived more inadequate to its purpose.

Reason and Scripture both assure us, that animal sacrifices can in themselves have no expiatory power, yet under the Law they were exalted into a means, if not of taking away, yet of covering, sin; how can we reconcile the apparent contradiction but by the supposition of some future effectual expiation, unrevealed indeed, or only dimly intimated, to man, but present to the mind of God, the virtue of which had a retrospective effect, and conferred on its temporary substitutes a cleansing power which did not naturally belong to them? And generally the structure of the Mosaic religion is such, that if it be supposed a final one, its appointments become difficult of vindication; they could neither satisfy, though they might express, the wants, nor correspond to the conceptions, of the more enlightened worshipper; they become, in short, reduced to "beggarly elements[a]," not merely, as the Apostle uses the expression, in comparison of the superior glory of the Gospel, but in themselves and absolutely. The more important therefore is it to satisfy ourselves that they had prospective uses, that they were intended to prefigure the great truths of redemption, and that if the divine Author of the Mosaic institutions Himself, by the destruction of the temple, and the dissolution of the national polity, brought the elder dispensation to a close, it was because, the reality being come of

[a] Gal. iv. 9.

which it presented the shadow, it was no longer needed.

Now both in the Old and in the New Testament Scriptures, man is represented as sinful by nature and by practice; as an inheritor of a corrupt nature[b], and as an actual transgressor of the divine law[c]. In consequence of this departure from his original righteousness, an estrangement took place between him and God; on man's part a sense of guilt drove him from the Divine presence[d], on God's that attribute of His which we call justice, or righteousness, exhibited itself under the form of displeasure against sin. In this there is nothing that is not accordant with our own moral sentiments; fallen as we are, we make a difference between virtue and vice, and this faculty of moral judgment, so far from being an evidence of imperfection, is a proof that the temple of human nature is not wholly in ruins, that the image of God in man is not wholly obliterated. Sentiments analogous to those, the possession of which distinguishes us from the fallen angels and makes us capable of spiritual recovery, it is surely no great effort to believe may exist in the highest intensity in Him who is the perfection of holiness. But the same God who cannot but hate sin, is a God of infinite love; and in the exuberance of His love devised means whereby

[b] Ps. li. 5. Rom. v. 12; viii. 7, 8. Ephes. ii. 3.
[c] Rom. i. ii. [d] Gen. iii. 8.

the penal consequences of transgression might be averted, and the way opened to reconciliation between the sinner and his Maker. These means consisted in the appointment of a Mediator, God manifest in the flesh, by whose interposition in our behalf, involving His own sufferings and death, the gracious design was effected, and man restored to the capacity of fellowship with God here, and of eternal life hereafter. In this too there is nothing contrary to our natural ideas; our great writer on the Analogy of religion has abundantly shewn, that the principle of mediation, whereby through the intervention of others the evil consequences of vice or carelessness are repaired or mitigated, pervades the whole of God's visible government of the world[e].

Such is the scheme of mercy in its most general outline; but it is with the specific nature of the great Mediator's work and office with which we are at present concerned, and to which we must confine our attention. The work of Christ then is described by the sacred writers of the New Testament (for on the field of prophecy I do not in this Lecture enter) under the two principal heads of intercession and sacrifice, according as the Redeemer is regarded as a Priest, or as an offering for sin. Permit me to bring together some of the Scripture statements on these points

[e] Butler, Anal. Part ii. c. 5.

successively, and only at such length as is compatible with the limits of a single discourse.

A priest, as we have already had occasion to observe, is one chosen by God to mediate between Himself and man. Thus the Levitical priesthood is described in the Old Testament as elected out of the elect nation, as standing, in comparison with the rest of the people, in a relation of peculiar nearness to Jehovah, and as the channels through which the atoning influences of the old covenant were conveyed to the people at large. It is precisely in this character that our blessed Lord is represented to us in the New Testament. If it is a general principle,—symbolized in all religions, the Jewish among the rest, by the limitation of a priesthood to a certain caste, or tribe,—that no one is a self-constituted priest, that the office is of divine, not of human, appointment, "so also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. As He saith also in another place, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek[g]." If a priest, as mediator, must, on the one hand, be in close connexion with God to present at the altar the blood, that is the life, of the victim, and to intercede in behalf of transgressors; and, on the other, possess a kindred nature with those whom he represents, that he may be the better able

[f] John iii. 16. [g] Heb. v. 5, 6.

to sympathize with their feelings and their infirmities; if he "is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, for that he also himself is compassed with infirmity[h];" so Christ in His divine nature is connected, by an ineffable union, with the Godhead, while in His human He is one with His brethren, one in temptation, in suffering, in sorrow, though not in sin, "that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God," "able to succour them that are tempted, in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted[i]." If in every religion the priesthood, as befits those admitted more immediately to the Divine presence, is invested with an official sanctity; symbolized under the Law by bodily perfection, sacred garments, and the solemn rites of consecration; so Christ, "tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin[j]," by His spotless obedience, both active and passive, became qualified to appear before God; "for such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners[k]," to whom the Father could bear testimony, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased[l]."

As Christ was thus in all points qualified to be a mediator between God and man, so the sacred

[h] Heb. v. 1, 2. [i] Heb. ii. 17, 18 [j] Heb. iv. 15.
[k] Heb. vii. 26. [l] Matt. iii. 17.

writers ascribe to Him, in His exalted condition at the right hand of God, the actual exercise of priestly functions. He is our "Advocate with the Father[m];" He "ever liveth to make intercession for us[n];" "Christ is not entered into the holy places, made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us[o];" "this Man, because He continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood[p]." Apprehensive of fatiguing my hearers, I content myself with the foregoing passages selected out of many which declare, unequivocally, that our Lord bore, and does now bear, in a true and proper sense, the sacerdotal office.

But a priesthood necessarily implies a sacrifice; the one is the correlative of the other, but not exactly on the same level of relation, for we may better conceive of sacrifice without a priesthood, than of priests without the blood of sacrifices to offer. Thus, in the promulgation of the Law we find the priesthood instituted before the regulations concerning sacrifice are given; Moses, who was not of the priestly family, officiating at the sacrifices used for the consecration of Aaron and his sons[q]. The Epistle to the Hebrews, in accordance with this natural order of things, first establishes the proper priesthood of Christ, and then passes

[m] 1 John ii. 1. [n] Rom. viii. 34. Heb. vii. 25.
[o] Heb. ix. 24. [p] Heb. vii. 24. [q] Exod. xxix. 12.

on to explain the import and efficacy of His sacrifice. I may observe, in passing, that this consideration may perhaps throw some light on the natural history of that corruption of Christianity, which consists in introducing a proper human priesthood, and proper sacrifices, under the Gospel. It has sometimes been questioned which of these errors arose first; whether the process was that Christian ministers first became invested with sacerdotal powers, and then the Eucharist, to complete the idea, was regarded as a sacrifice; or, in the reverse order, the Lord's table became an altar, and then Christian ministers priests; but we can have little doubt that the former was the actual course of things. The hierarchical spirit which so soon began to prevail in the Church, and the tempting parallel which so readily suggested itself between the three orders of the Christian ministry and the High Priest, Priests, and Levites of the Jews, transformed presbyters and bishops into priests, and as to a priest a sacrifice is necessary, the ordinance which commemorates the Saviour's death was made to assume this character.

If it be admitted then (and I am not aware that save by avowed Socinians this point is contested) that Scripture assigns to Christ sacerdotal functions, in a real not a figurative sense; it seems to follow that a sacrifice must have been offered, and that that sacrifice must correspond to the reality

of the sacerdotal office of which it is the necessary appendage. "Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat to offer[r];" what He offered was Himself; "once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself[s]."

By the sacred writers the work of atonement is made to culminate in the death of Christ; and the main question we have to determine is, in what light do they represent that death? Was it merely the seal of His doctrine, and the consummation of His obedience; or a proof that conscience, laden with a sense of guilt, delivers a false testimony, and that in reality we have not, and never had, any thing to fear from God, who is a God of pure mercy, by no means extreme to mark what is amiss? Was it in order to convince us how erroneous are those ideas, which so strangely appear in the religions of all peoples of all ages, which are so deeply lodged in every human heart,—the ideas of a broken law, of Divine displeasure, of expiation, satisfaction, propitiation,—that God delivered His only-begotten Son to suffer and to die like one of us, as the most decisive proof He could give of His never having entertained the sentiments we are apt to attribute to Him? Was it to chase away these spectres of the imagination which alone prevented our becoming reconciled to

[r] Heb. viii. 3. [s] Heb. ix. 26.

God, that the Saviour endured the cross, despising the shame? Strange that a simple declaration on God's part, that sin is a phantom, that it consists in distrusting His goodness, in not believing that He was always reconciled to man, should not have been sufficient for this purpose without so costly a surrender. Far otherwise indeed is the scriptural account of this great transaction. I do not presume too much on the knowledge even of the youngest amongst us, when I appeal to them, whether the death of Christ be not by the Apostles represented as a true expiatory, and propitiatory, sacrifice for the sins of the world. A piacular sacrifice is one that removes guilt by atoning for it; it cleanses, by expiating, a stain which had previously attached to an individual, a nation, a race; and so we read that the "blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin[t];" that "He gave Himself" for the Church, "that He might sanctify," that is, legally cleanse, "it[u]," "that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people[x];" we are said to be "sanctified" (in the same sense as before) "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all[y]," and to have been by Him "washed from our sins in His own blood[z]." A propitiatory sacrifice is one which besides expiating reconciles, or rather reconciles by expiating; and in reference to Christ we are taught, that "God set Him forth to be a

[t] 1 John i. 7. [u] Ephes. v. 26. [x] Tit. ii. 14.
[y] Heb. x. 10. [z] Rev. i. 5.

propitiation through faith in His blood[a];" that "He is the propitiation for our sins[b];" that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself," not inducing us to lay aside our enmity, though this in its place is also a necessary part of redemption, but, as the Apostle immediately explains, "not imputing their trespasses unto them[c]," that is, rendering the world which by reason of sin had been an object of His displeasure now no longer so. Indeed, lest we should suppose that the reconciliation is merely on our part, the same Apostle, in another Epistle, expressly tells us, that "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son[d];" that is, that before any change of sentiment took place on our side towards God, an objective act of reconciliation took place on His; a change being, by the death of Christ, wrought in the aspect which the world presented to God. Not only do the sacred writers thus explicitly affirm the proper propitiatory character of Christ's sacrifice, but they seem to labour to impress this great truth on our minds by figurative expressions drawn from human transactions. Thus, the ideas of redemption from a state of captivity and of propitiatory atonement being closely connected, as running up into the common notion of deliverance, we are said to have been redeemed from the bondage of sin, from the curse

[a] Rom. iii. 25. [b] 1 John ii. 1. [c] 2 Cor. v. 19.
[d] Rom. v. 10.

of the law[e]; the ransom paid was His blood, the effect to us was release, or redemption[f]. Christ Himself declares, that He "came to give His life a ransom for many[g];" and St. Paul asserts, that in Him "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins[h]," in which words the figure and the thing signified are blended together. To the same effect are the numerous passages which describe Christians as purchased, or bought, by Christ; St. Paul reminds us that we "are bought with a price[i]," and exhorts the Ephesian elders to "feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood[j]."

Such is the teaching of Scripture on the nature of Christ's sacrifice: it will be observed that the passages cited contain no direct reference to the law of Moses; they are perfectly general in character. And I deem it important that it should be remembered, that the doctrine of the Atonement, as commonly understood in the Church, can be established from the New Testament, irrespectively of any typical allusion to the ancient economy; for from the time of Priestley downwards, a favourite topic with those who would recast the Gospel in a Socinian mould has been the necessity of extricating it from Jewish associations, and the temporary garb which, in accommodation, it is said, to the modes of thought prevalent in the Apostolic

[e] Rom. vi. 18. Gal. iii. 13. [f] 1 Pet. i. 18. [g] Matt. xx. 28.
[h] Ephes. i. 7. [i] 1 Cor. vi. 20. [j] Acts xx. 28.

age, it assumed, and in which it appears in the Apostolic Epistles. It is implied, of course, in these reasonings that the work of Christ is described in the New Testament only under figures, and by expressions, drawn from the Mosaic economy, as if wherever the words cleansing, reconciliation, propitiation, intercession, and the like, occur, there must needs be a reference to the Jewish law; than which no supposition can be more arbitrary. As in order to extricate the symbolical import of the Jewish rites of sacrifice, we considered them by themselves and irrespectively of any light which the New Testament may throw upon them, so let us suppose that the Old Testament had never been written, or that every passage containing allusions to the Levitical ritual were expunged from the New;—enough will still remain to establish, beyond all reasonable doubt, the proper expiatory character of Christ's death. The fact is, that all religions, with, it is said, one exception[k], have their priests, and their sacrifices, propitiatory as well as eucharistic; and if Judaism had never existed, if Christianity had had no historical connexion with any other religion, past or present, it would have been no matter of surprise to us to find it founded on facts involving these ideas. The wonder would rather be, that, with the religious instincts of humanity in every country, in every age, pointing in one direction, to a sense of

[k] Buddhism, see Thomson's Bampton Lectures, p. 44.

guilt, to the necessity of expiation, and this by means of sacrifice, to propitiation of an alienated superior power, a religion professing to come from God should fail to satisfy those wants which nature, however imperfectly, had endeavoured to express. That the expiatory sacrifices of the heathen were grossly superstitious, inasmuch as no natural connexion can be perceived between the death of an animal and forgiveness of sin, may be true; but the superstition lay, not in the want felt, but in the mode by which it was attempted to be supplied; not in the feeling of the disease, but in the belief that such a remedy could of itself be of any avail: and Christianity independently of any fulfilment of type or prophecy, as the perfect religion in which all true religious ideas were to find a place, in which every real want of human nature was to receive satisfaction;—and of a religion really coming from God no less than this can be predicated;—might be expected to exhibit a real expiation for sin by means of an efficacious sacrifice, elevating what had been superstitiously devised by unenlightened reason to the dignity and authority of a divine appointment. And this, as we have seen, is the case. The New Testament has its own great Priest and sacrifice, and it has its own independent explanations of the import of that sacrifice: dismiss from your minds the fact that any preparatory, typical, system existed, and you will still be able, with a superfluity of proof,

to convince yourselves, that by Christ's death sin was expiated, God reconciled to the world, and man delivered from the penalty of transgression; ideas which, far from being the special property of the Mosaic dispensation, form, more or less, the groundwork of all, or nearly all, the religions that have existed in the world.

It is, under these circumstances, no matter of surprise to find the sacred writers connecting, in the most emphatic manner, the two dispensations, and referring us to the Levitical institutions as prefigurative of the truths of the Gospel. That they do assert this typical connexion lies on the very surface of Scripture, and is admitted. Of our Lord it is recorded, that "beginning with Moses, and all the Prophets," He expounded to the sorrowing disciples, on the road to Emmaus, "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself[l];" while His Apostles tell us, in general, that "the law," the ceremonial law, presented a "shadow of good things to come," though "not the very image of the things[m];" and in particular, that not only is Christ a priest and a sacrifice, but that in His priesthood and sacrifice the Levitical appointments received their fulfilment as the type merges into the antitype. One whole Epistle, of which, whether it be the production of St. Paul or not, the canonicity has not as yet been assailed, is devoted to this special object;—to shew how

[l] Luke xxiv. 27. [m] Heb. x. 1.

Christ, by absorbing into Himself all the elements of the Jewish sacrificial system, has put an end for ever to the ceremonial law. In the other Epistles the same line of thought occurs, though the subject is not so frequently or so formally discussed. St. Paul speaks of Christ's giving Himself "as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour[n]," and of His being "our Passover sacrificed for us[o];" St. Peter of His blood corresponding in redeeming power to that "of a Lamb without spot and blemish[p];" St. John of His being "a Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world[q];" allusions, all of them, to the offerings of the Law. But, as I have observed, it is the Epistle to the Hebrews that chiefly enlarges on the typical aspect of the Levitical appointments. In the writer's view the work of Christ finds its counterpart in the most significant ceremonies of that ritual. The inauguration of the Mosaic covenant by the sprinkling of blood; the ordinance of the red heifer, whose ashes mingled with water availed to remove the pollution occasioned by contact with a dead body; the ceremonial of the great day of atonement, on which alone the sacred gloom of the most holy place was invaded by the high priest, bearing the atoning blood by which the sins of Israel collectively were expiated; all convey to the writer's mind a vivid image of the one great atonement

[n] Ephes. i. 2. [o] 1 Cor. v. 7. [p] 1 Pet. i. 19. [q] John i. 29.

offered on Calvary, and of the continued priestly intercession of the exalted Redeemer[r]. And why should they not have done so? There was, in truth, a marvellous coincidence, in these points, between the Law and the Gospel, each principal circumstance of the former answering to a corresponding one of the latter; the Jewish high priest to the great High Priest of our profession; the most holy place of the tabernacle to the heaven whither Christ had ascended; the legal sacrifices to the sacrifice of Christ; and the sprinkling of the blood and the intercession of the Jewish mediator to an analogous exercise of sacerdotal functions on the part of the Redeemer. The proof of prophetic inspiration is the exact fulfilment of prophecy in events which could not have been by human foresight or sagacity surmised; we have here a parallel case; the types of the law prove their divine origin by their accurate and intended correspondence with the facts of that mysterious scheme of redeeming mercy which human reason could never have devised.

I say, their intended correspondence, for the same writer who states the points of agreement, tells us that the coincidence was designed; as indeed is almost self-evident, for how can we conceive of two religions emanating from the same divine Author, and corresponding in all essential ideas, and not conclude that the earlier,

[r] See Heb. ix. 23; 13, 14; 7—12.

and preparatory, one was intended to prefigure the later and more perfect? But we are told expressly that such is the relation between the Law and the Gospel: "The Holy Ghost this signifying," in the various appointments of the ceremonial law, "that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present[s]." And this furnishes us with the true reply to the old and favourite solvent of accommodation, or of figurative allusion, in explaining the transfer of the Old Testament sacrificial terms to Christian uses. The phraseology in question, we are told, was adopted because it had previously belonged to the Law; Christ's sacrifice was no real one, He is not a real Priest, but since the Apostles were Jews, habituated to Jewish images and modes of expression, it was impossible for them to throw off these at once; and therefore though they meant something quite different, they clothed their thoughts in the familiar garb to which they had been accustomed.

Upon the real nature of the language in question, that it is not figurative but expressive of real analogies, it is not necessary to make any remarks, inasmuch as this point has been excellently handled by one of my predecessors in this Lecture[t]; but let me pause for a moment to request it may be con-

[s] Heb. ix. 8.

[t] Veysie, Bampton Lectures, Lect. V.

sidered how such a theory as this is compatible with any proper view of the inspiration of either of the great divisions of God's word. It has already been observed, that the dignity and use of the Mosaic rites can only be vindicated on the supposition of their having been intended to delineate the truths of the Gospel, apart from which reference they remain a dark enigma; but the theory in question goes further than this; it makes the Law not only unmeaning and incomprehensible, but a source of positive error: had it not been for its historical connexion with Judaism, Christianity would not have been delineated under erroneous figures, and one great source of the misconceptions that have prevailed in the Church on the doctrine of the Atonement would have been cut off: our main business now must be to separate the Old Testament from the New, the misleading figure from the latent reality; for as Christians we can derive no spiritual nutriment from the former. But if this be the case, how can we stop short of the conclusion, that the Jewish Scriptures can lay no claim to a divine origin? And this indeed is the question to which we are drifting, and which it behoves us fairly to meet;—Was the Jewish dispensation from God, or was it not? The studied depreciation of the Scriptures of the old covenant, which has ever marked the course of rationalism abroad, and which is one of the most unfavourable symptoms of recent theological movements at home,

betrays a consciousness that these Scriptures must be deprived of their authority before any success can be hoped for in the enterprise of republishing a Gospel without a priest, without a sacrifice, without a real atonement.

But not less is the discredit which is thus cast on the writers of the Christian Scriptures as competent expounders of the Gospel with which they were entrusted. For what, on the hypothesis in question, is the case? The inspired teachers of a new religion, as we believe them to have been, are found describing, and this not once or casually, but repeatedly and of set purpose, certain capital truths of the religion under figures which are sure to mislead, and which in fact have given rise to serious and universal error in the Church ever since there was a Church in the world. If they had even informed us that their expressions were to be taken figuratively, and had explained what they really meant, it would have been some alleviation of the difficulty; but this they have in no instance done: we may challenge the production of a single passage in which the Apostles tell us that their references to the Jewish religion are not to be taken in their natural sense; they make use of the so-called figurative expressions, but they leave us to discover the import, and, as was very likely to happen, to blunder in the exposition. It must be observed that this is not a case in which no misconception could occur, as when we

call a man figuratively a lion on account of his being eminent for courage; here of course it is impossible to mistake the one for the other; but in the comparisons of Christ's work with the Jewish atonements we have real corresponding circumstances, like in kind, and in relation, though of disparate value: we have a human priest and a divine Priest; the death of an animal and the death of Christ; the shedding of blood, and a similar atoning power ascribed to the blood, in both cases: it was inevitable therefore that the error alleged to have arisen from the use of this language should arise, no precautions on our part could have obviated the mischief. But what reliance can we place in general on those whom we have been accustomed to regard as inspired guides, or what notion can we form of their inspiration, when we find them apparently mistaken themselves, and certainly misleading us, on so capital a point?

May we not advance a step further, and ask, (though the Christian can with difficulty bring himself to state the inference,) what confidence can we, if the Law is no trustworthy source of instruction on the Gospel, repose in Christ Himself, who, it seems, was so far mistaken as regards the import of His own death, as to compare it with the expiatory sacrifices with which the Mosaic covenant was inaugurated; and this on the most solemn occasion conceivable, the last supper with His

disciples; when, delivering to them the cup, He said, "This is my blood of the New Testament," or covenant, "which is shed for many for the remission of sins[u]."

Happily there is no need to fall back on this theory of accommodation to explain any difficulty in the Apostolic testimony. The Apostles could not have spoken figuratively of a sacrifice of atonement offered by Christ, for what they were describing was a reality; *the* reality to which the Levitical appointments had been purposely accommodated. Were there any discrepancy between those representations of Christ's work which the inspired writers give us in general, and without any particular reference to the Mosaic law, and the ideas expressed in that law, it might have occasioned some embarrassment; but it has been already shewn, that we can establish the doctrine of the Atonement from neutral passages, to affirm of which that their language was derived from the legal economy is a mere arbitrary assertion. In fact, the whole argument is a preposterous one, in the literal sense of the word[x]. So far from the scheme of the Gospel having been accommodated to the Law, the very reverse was the case; the Law was framed with a prospective reference to the Gospel. Such is the distinct explanation of the Apostles themselves. The

[u] Matt. xxvi. 28.

[x] Davison, Prim. Sacrifice, note, p. 195.

sacrifice and priesthood of Christ dated from all eternity; He was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world[y]," He was "a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec;" these were the heavenly things of which the Mosaic appointments were the earthly patterns. So that the work of Christ was first in the counsels of God, and then came the typical representation; not in the reverse order. What was first in the counsels of God was last indeed in the revelation, but this is of no consequence to the argument; the mystery was, for wise purposes, hidden until the appointed time for its disclosure, but it was ever present to the Divine mind, and ruled and moulded all the appointments that took place in time. Disclosed, it illuminated the whole of the typical dispensation with a light from heaven. Then was seen, what could not have been seen before, why the legal institutions assumed the shape they did; why priesthood, and sacrifice, and atonement by the sprinkling of blood, formed such prominent features of the ancient economy. The Apostles' task therefore was, not to construct the Gospel in conformity to the Mosaic system, but either, like the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, to prove to the wavering Jewish converts that their prophetical types were fulfilled in Christ, and being fulfilled were not to continue in the Christian Church; or, by recurring to the

[y] Rev. xiii. 8.

symbolism of the Law, to illustrate and explain to stedfast Christians the peculiarities of the Christian scheme.

And this latter is a use to which we may still apply the Levitical ritual. Having once established, independently of the Law, the proper sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, as the archetypal originals in adaptation to which the Mosaic religion was framed, we may most profitably go back to the Law for the elucidation, or confirmation, of any point which may be thought to need such additional light. Let me select, as examples, two not unimportant doctrines, the vicariousness of the Redeemer's sacrifice, and the representative character of the Redeemer Himself. In the preceding Lecture, I took occasion to point out how strongly the vicarious principle appeared in the Mosaic sacrifices; how life made atonement for life, and the offerer by the imposition of hands identified himself with the victim offered. The Gospel teaches us why this was inculcated. It was because Christ was, in due time, to "bear our sins in His own body on the tree[z];" because He was to be made "sin," not a sin-offering but a sin-substitute, "for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him[a];" our sins and their penalty being laid on Him, His obedience, active and passive, being laid to our account. But if any one should be in doubt

[z] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [a] 2 Cor. v. 21.

concerning the meaning of these and similar passages in the New Testament, let him turn to the vivid symbolism of the Mosaic ritual, and he will find there a commentary which will set his doubts at rest.

Our attention was also directed to the representative relation in which the Jewish high priest stood to the rest of the nation. On several important occasions he acted, not merely as mediator between the people and Jehovah, but as representing them in His own person, as the federal head of the commonwealth. The New Testament furnishes the explanation of this circumstance. For Christ was to stand in a similar relation generally to redeemed humanity, and specially to the members of His mystical body. He was to be the second Adam, occupying the same position in reference to the new creation which the first Adam did to his posterity, both being federal heads from whom in the one case sin and death, in the other righteousness and life, are derived[b]. As by one man and in one man the race fell, so by one man, the new scion grafted upon the stock of corrupted humanity, the race was potentially restored, and is actually restored in those who are united to Him by a living faith. With a true Christian instinct, therefore, the Church has held fast that doctrine of imputation, both of sin and of righteousness, with which the

[b] Rom. v. 12—19. 1 Cor. xv. 45.

name of Augustin is associated, against the Pelagian or semi-Pelagian view, which regards men as isolated atoms, sinners or righteous in the sight of God, respectively, solely from their personal actions, and with which Socinianism has ever been found so readily to assimilate. For in truth it is but St. Paul's doctrine under another form, concerning the representative character of Adam and Christ respectively, and which is not this Apostle's doctrine only, but that of all the inspired writers. Christ is the Vine, Christians the branches[c]; Christ is the Head, Christians the members[d]; Christ is the Corner-stone, Christians the stones, of the spiritual temple[e]: let it not be said that these are mere figures; the figures of Scripture in reference to Christ contain deep truths. It is from their being thus counted one with Christ, that Christians are so frequently identified with Him in the various stages of His redeeming work, that they are said to have died and been buried with Him[f], to have risen with Him[g], to have sat down with Him in the heavenly places[h]; expressions unintelligible save on the hypothesis of His being their federal Head. In its bearing on our present subject, the atonement of Christ, the importance of the Augustinian, or imputative, theory is evident; if Christ were but *a* man, one

[c] John xv. 1. [d] Ephes. i. 22, 23.
[e] Ephes. ii. 20—22. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.
[f] Rom. vi. 3—5. [g] Col. iii. 1. [h] Ephes. ii. 6.

of the many, His death becomes an isolated fact; and, however it may be supposed to affect our condition, loses its vicarious import: how different is the aspect which it assumes when we regard Him as in our stead, and as our representative, obedient unto death, so that in Him the redeemed may be said, in a real sense, to have satisfied the demands of the Law both passively and actively. This great truth is so clearly taught in the New Testament, that it needs no further confirmation from any quarter; but it may be interesting to the student to observe, that precisely the same public, representative, character is, in the Old Testament, ascribed to the Jewish high priest, the type of the one great High Priest of the Christian Church.

It is thus that while the New Testament proves the prophetical character of the Mosaic ritual, this latter in its turn elucidates, in many points, the work of Christ, and so both the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures combine, in harmonious operation, to establish the believer in his most holy faith. If he wishes to know *why* the Law bore the characters it did, he must sit at the Apostles' feet; if he wishes to know *what* the work of Christ was and is, both Law and Gospel will instruct him. And let him mark how under the latter all the imperfections of the Levitical atonements are supplied. The legal priests "were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this Man,

because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood," and "ever liveth to make intercession" for us[i]. The victims which bled on the Jewish altar were only in a negative sense sinless; sinless because the terms sin and guilt are inapplicable to the brute creation; but in Christ a victim is seen positively "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners[k]." The blood of bulls and goats owed its atoning power solely to its typical reference, and to mark its inherent worthlessness the sacrifices were repeated year by year; the blood of Christ, being of infinite power, cleanses at once from all sin; "by one offering," never to be repeated, "He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified[l]." The inferiority of the typical ordinance was shewn by the separation of its constituent parts, the offerer, the victim, and the priest, being all distinct; in Christ they are united: He freely offered Himself as our substitute[m]; by His own blood He washed us from our sins[n]; and He now, in His sacerdotal office, applies the efficacy of that blood-shedding to all who by faith come to Him.

The truth of the position which was to form the subject of the present discourse, that the Mosaic appointments of priesthood and sacrifice were both typical and illustrative of the corresponding Christian facts; and that, being so, the

[i] Heb. vii. 23—25. [k] Heb. vii. 26. [l] Heb. x. 14.
[m] Heb. ix. 14; x. 5—9. [n] Rev. i. 5.

religion of which they formed the most conspicuous features can be referred to no other than a divine origin; has now, I conceive, been made sufficiently manifest. On the philosophy, or theory, of the great transaction by which the sin of the world has been taken away, it is the less necessary to make any lengthened remarks, as the subject has been lately presented to us under almost every aspect of which it is capable. Let me, however, before I conclude, add an observation or two to those which have so abundantly vindicated the divine appointments of a Mediator and a propitiatory sacrifice in the Person of Christ.

The old objections, that by the doctrine of the Atonement, as commonly received, we represent God as an implacable Deity, and as influenced by human passions, have been so often refuted, that it is not without surprise that we see them in the present day recalled from their merited obscurity. As it was Jehovah Himself who gave the atoning ordinances of the Law to Israel to cover sin, so God "so *loved* the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son" to die for it. Again, how could the unfathomable depths of the Divine mind be made intelligible to us, or be brought to bear upon our practice, save by means of analogies drawn from sentiments which we experience in ourselves and see in others? But there is one topic especially prominent in the mystical, or philosophical, religionism of the day;—the so-

called moral sense, or moral consciousness of man, it is urged, is irreconcileable with the popular ideas respecting the atonement of Christ. The ideas of the payment of a debt, of the cancelling of a bond, of satisfaction to Divine justice, are at once repelled by the unsophisticated heart as unworthy of the Deity, and inapplicable to the case in hand°.

Now it has been well replied, in general, that, whatever may have been the case with man before he fell, the moral sense, or reason, of *fallen* man is no competent judge of the divine appointments; but unless I am mistaken, the objection admits of direct refutation. Let it be considered then whether the representations alluded to do not

° See Coleridge's Aids to Reflection, p. 314—328. This writer must not be ranked with unbelievers, but there is reason to fear that his speculations on religion have proved of serious detriment to reflective minds, unable as yet cordially to accept the humbling doctrines of the Gospel. Like too many of his school, he caricatures the opposite view: e. g. "Sin" (according to this view) "represents an infinite debt, a debt due to the vindictive justice of God the Father, which can only be liquidated by the everlasting misery of Adam and all his posterity." It is easy to frame yourself your adversary's argument, and then to overthrow the work of your own hands. One concession however, in the present writer's view a very important one, appears in the work; viz. that St. Paul's "figures" are "so judiciously selected, that the prominent forms, the figures of most frequent recurrence, are drawn from points of belief and practice, forms and laws, rites, and customs, that then prevailed through the whole Roman world, and were common to Jew and Gentile." p. 315.

leave out of view an idea most deeply rooted in the moral sense of, at least, fallen man, and which finds constant expression in the common language of life, the idea of expiation as distinguished from reconciliation. Let me explain myself by a familiar instance. Nothing, then, is more common than to hear it said of a criminal that he has expiated his crime on the scaffold; or for the observation to be made that a youth of folly and vice has been expiated by years of subsequent suffering. Let us consider attentively what is meant by this expression. We obviously speak of punishment here not as a means of repairing mischief done, which in some cases, as that of murder, is impossible; nor as a means of deterring others from the commission of a like crime; nor of reforming the criminal, for in capital punishments this too is impossible: a far deeper idea than any of these lies at the root of this ordinary language, that of the necessity of the restoration of right, infringed, but not to be infringed with impunity. The state, as a divine institution intended to maintain right in the form of law[p], purges itself, by the punishment of the criminal, of participation in his crime; the criminal himself by suffering the punishment restores matters, as far as in him lies, to their former position, and, in a certain sense, is as if he had never transgressed; whence the observation of the Apostle, that "he that is dead is freed," or

[p] See Rom. xiii. 2.

justified, "from sin[q]." Punishment under this aspect, is the recoil of the eternal law of right against the transgressor; the act itself of transgression cannot be reversed, but its unrighteousness is thus, by the counterstroke of justice, removed, or expiated. This is the true idea of expiation; and any theory of state punishments which omits it is so far defective.

Now so far from this notion's being contrary to the moral sense, the whole history of crime proves how agreeable thereto it is. Instances are on record in which criminals, whose sin would never in this world have found them out, have been impelled by the secret craving for atonement, in the sense of expiation, to deliver themselves voluntarily into the hands of justice; and this being done, have expressed their satisfaction, as if a burden which had long lain on the heart had been removed. The feeling in such cases is, not merely that injury has been done to individuals, but that a righteous law has been violated, that a debt to justice has been incurred, and that, by suffering the penalty, the breach will be, in some sense, repaired, the debt cancelled.

The application of this to the work of Christ will be obvious; for translate the theological term satisfaction, whether to the divine law, or the divine justice, into common language, and what does it signify but that, in the sense just explained,

[q] Rom. vi. 7. *ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας.*

sin has been expiated by the death of Christ? The term may not be the most happy one that could have been chosen, and it may have given rise to unwise speculations[r]; but penetrate beneath the surface, and you will find a solid foundation for the idea as applied to the Christian atonement. To say that the divine law must be satisfied, is to say that sin must be expiated; and no feeling is more innate, and more universal, than this. In fact, so deeply is it lodged in the human heart, that even now, after a full and sufficient expiation for sin has been revealed in Christ, the tendency on man's part is to introduce supplementary atonements of his own devising: it is difficult to bring him to rest satisfied in the one great atonement. And let this doctrine, which is emphatically the Gospel, the doctrine of plenary remission of sin through faith in Christ, be removed from sight, or obscured, and instantly you will find man erecting a structure of his own to supply its place. What are the gloomy secrets of the penitential discipline of Rome but an effort on the part of the guilty conscience, robbed of its proper remedy by the assumed priestly power of the keys, and the intervention of created mediators, to supply itself with expiations which alleviate, though they never can remove, the gnaw-

[r] As, for example, when it was debated whether the satisfaction were rendered to God or to Satan. See Hagenbach's Dogmengeschichte, §. 134 and 180.

ing of the worm within? Yes, sinful man may forgive others, but he is inexorable to himself. You may tell him that God is merciful, that repentance is sufficient to procure forgiveness of sin, but it is of no avail; the craving for reparation, for atonement, remains unsatisfied, and as long as it is so, there can be no true peace. We want the assurance not merely that our sins are forgiven, but that they are forgiven because expiated. Such an assurance the Gospel gives us when it proclaims the fact, that God reconciled the world to Himself by giving His Son to become the substitute for sinners, and to bear the penalty of their sins upon the cross.

Let me exhort you then, my younger brethren, to hold fast, in this most important point, the faith once delivered to the saints, and let not any pretensions to superior illumination induce you to exchange it for the fancies of unchastened speculation, which may amuse the intellect, but which chill the heart. The great danger to which we are here exposed is intellectual pride, the affectation of freedom from vulgar prejudice, operating on a speculative cast of religion which has never been tested by the cares and trials of common life, or by actual dealings with men in the exercise of the pastoral function. A little experience of this kind will scatter to the winds the gossamer theories of the intellect, and force us to fall back on the simple scriptural faith which

alone conveys strength in life, and consolation at the hour of death. Be assured that what are called large, or philosophical, views of Christianity are often in reality shallow and contracted compared with the simple, yet mysterious, revelations of Scripture, which the mightiest intellect cannot fathom, but which the humble Christian, too wise to be philosophical, feels exactly to meet his case. These theories commonly betray their human origin by ignoring some great truth respecting the Divine nature, or the nature of man, and then, as is easy to do, constructing a system out of the mutilated conception. Thus Socinianism is based on the assumption, that God is a God of pure and unmixed benevolence. And not only hold fast the Scriptural doctrine of the Atonement as Christians, but, if you are called, or intend to be called, to the more arduous office of the Christian ministry, be mindful to give it that prominence in your ministrations which rightfully belongs to it. For in truth this is the only talisman which has ever been found effectual to unlock the closed heart, and to restore its wandering affections to their rightful Master. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me[s]." Apart from the full exhibition of this central object under its various aspects, our ministrations lose all their power, both because the Holy Spirit will not cooperate with a mutilated, or concealed,

[s] John xii. 32.

Gospel, and because the animating spring of all Christian obedience, the "love of Christ" which "constraineth us," is wanting. Let us tremble at the thought of being unfaithful stewards of the mysteries of God, and withholding the bread of life from those whose spiritual interests are committed to our care, and for whom we shall have to give account at the day of Christ. All Christian holiness springs from the consciousness of peace with God through Jesus Christ; but this consciousness never visits the heart which has not been taught, and has not learned, to believe that sin has been once and for ever expiated by Christ's death, and that faith is the connecting link between that expiatory sacrifice and individual justification.

LECTURE V.

Acts x. 43.

To Him give all the Prophets witness.

The ceremonial Law was not the only means of instruction vouchsafed to the ancient Church: besides the teaching of the typical ordinances, direct communications respecting God's designs, in the kingdoms both of providence and of grace, proceeding from a succession of inspired persons raised up for this purpose, opened up to the Jewish believer glimpses of the future dispensation, to which his own was introductory, and in which it was to terminate. It becomes then of moment to consider whether these two great branches of revelation coincide in their general results; whether the lessons of prophecy correspond with those of the Law, the ceremonial, so far as it symbolized the truths of the Gospel, as well as the moral; and so both bear a united and harmonious testimony to Him that should come, in whom both, we believe, have been fulfilled. For it is obvious that any serious discrepancy of import

between them would go far to annul the authority of each, and especially their use towards determining the nature of the Christian dispensation; not to mention that one of the main evidences of our faith would be seriously impaired.

I have said, so far as the ceremonial Law symbolized the truths of the Gospel, because the range of subjects to which it extended is obviously much more contracted than that which prophecy takes in. While it is the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ which form the main subjects of the Levitical types, prophecy enlarges not only upon these but upon other particulars connected with the Redeemer;—His person, His sufferings as well as death, His subsequent glory, and the nature of His kingdom. But if prophecy had thus the advantage in the scope of its revelations, it was far more tardy in the communication. The Jewish sacrificial system contained, as we have seen, a full and accurate adumbration of the particular Christian facts to which it refers; and this at a time when the notices of prophecy on the same subjects were but meagre. What the law conveyed in one representation, prophecy slowly, in the lapse of centuries, disclosed, and its greatest oracles respecting the atoning work of Christ are perhaps inferior in completeness of detail to the corresponding symbolism of the Levitical ritual. This indeed is one of the advantages of the mode of teaching by symbol; that it can express in one

and the same action both the general thing intended, and the subordinate particulars which fill up the conception; can combine simplicity of meaning with complexity of detail; and present to the eye in one group the ideas which oral instruction is compelled to exhibit separately, and in succession. Had the Jew possessed the key to his ritual, no discoveries of prophecy could have added to his knowledge in the points which that ritual was intended to illustrate.

Before making some observations on the subject-matter of prophecy as introductory to the Gospel, I would draw attention to the important place which the prophetical office occupied as one of the standing institutions of the Theocracy.

I would observe then, in the first place, that the nearest approach which we find in the ancient economy to that great ordinance of the Gospel, the ministry of God's word, was exhibited in the prophetic function. Properly speaking, the Jewish Church had no standing means of grace of this kind; for though to the Levites was committed the charge of studying and teaching the law[a], it does not appear that they attempted more than the task of interpretation in points involving difficulty[b]; while prophecy itself was irregular in its exercise, and often intermitted for long periods of time. Yet the pastoral office, so far as it did

[a] Deut. xxxiii. 10.

[b] Vitringa De Synog. Vet. l. i. p. 2. c. 8.

then exist, was discharged by the prophets, or those trained under their superintendence. For it seems to have been the custom for these inspired teachers to gather round themselves associations of disciples, or students, who lived together under a common rule, and who frequently appear in Scripture under the title of the sons of the prophets[c]; from which notices it may likewise be gathered that they existed in considerable numbers. Instructed thus by one himself taught of God, they became fitted to teach others, and we cannot doubt that by their means the knowledge of divine truth, in its various stages of communication, became widely disseminated amongst the people.

In the next place, the prophetic office operated as a safeguard, so far as any institution could do so, against the dangers to be apprehended from a corrupt government, or priesthood. Its corrective influence, in relation to these orders of the state, must have been very great. An ungodly king might attempt to draw away his people from the worship of Jehovah, or an ambitious hierarchy might devise schemes for its own undue aggrandisement; but neither could be secure from the unwelcome intrusion of some inspired messenger from God, taken indiscriminately from any tribe, who, with the utmost intrepidity and faithfulness, dealt rebuke on all sides, and denounced the divine judgments against a guilty land. I have

[c] 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Kings ii. 5. iv. 38.

had occasion, in a preceding discourse, to point out how the growth of spiritual despotism was, under the Mosaic constitution, checked by the publicity of the national code which was equally the property of the priests and of the people; but the prophetic function must have formed a still stronger impediment to sacerdotal encroachments. And, in fact, it proved an effectual one. The Jews killed their prophets, but they were never enslaved to their priests. King, people, and priesthood, sometimes combined against the common disturber of their false peace; but his reproofs, however unheeded, must have dissipated any superstitious veneration which mere official claims, or an ostentatious sanctity, without the reality, might have given birth to in the popular mind.

But I proceed to the substance of the prophetic revelation; adopting the usual, and comprehensive, division of it, into its didactic, and predictive matter.

I. That is a narrow conception of Hebrew prophecy which would limit its use to the prediction of future events. The prophets combined in themselves the two characters which heathen antiquity has distinguished by the names of μάντις and προφήτης; the former, the immediate recipient of the pretended divine inspiration, being properly the foreteller of what was to come; the latter the interpreter of the oracular responses thus de-

livered[d]. Thus in prophecy we find distinct predictions, the fulfilment of which stamps them as genuine communications from heaven; but likewise a large body of instruction touching upon almost every point of morals and religion,—the nature of God, His attributes, His universal providence, the evil and danger of sin, and the happiness and safety of pious obedience;—a body of doctrine which, not less than the predictive matter, attests its divine source by its immeasurable superiority to the most boasted productions of uninspired reason. No insignificant part of the

[d] Βησσοὶ δὲ τῶν Σατρέων εἰσὶ οἱ προφητεύοντες τοῦ ἱροῦ, πρόμαντις δὲ ἡ χρέουσα, κατά περ ἐν Δελφοῖσι. Herod. b. vii. c. 111. It is a remarkable circumstance, that while the art of divination was every where professed and practised, (vetus opinio est—omnium gentium firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines divinationem, quam Græci μαντικὴν appellant, id est, præsensionem et scientiam rerum futurarum. Cic. De Div. l. i. c. 1.) the gift of moral prophecy, as described in the text, was never assumed or exercised by the heathen oracles. Superstition could ally itself with the former more readily than with the latter. None of the Hebrew appellations of the prophet (הָרֹאֶה, הַנָּבִיא, הַחֹזֶה, 1 Chron. xxix. 29.) direct our minds principally to the power of divination, but rather to the office of interpreting the divine counsels. "If we consider the benefit derived to the ancient Church, from prophecy in its strictest sense, we shall find it consisted not in making men prophets, or enabling them to foretel future events, but rather in maintaining high and consolatory views of the providence and attributes of God, accompanied with a firm but humble assurance of his gracious interposition in their concerns." Robert Hall, Works, vol. ii. p. 208.

prophetic writings is occupied with matter of this kind. So far indeed is the Scripture notion of prophecy from being that of a mere power of divination, that in the spiritual gift of the Apostolic age to which, doubtless from its analogy to that of the elder covenant, this name is given, the predictive character quite recedes from view, and its chief use, according to St. Paul, was to edify the Church, and convince unbelievers: "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort[e];" "If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth[f]."

It is obvious that, under this aspect, prophecy was to the Jewish Church a means of present edification, more so perhaps than in its properly predictive character. To the prophets, as foretelling "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister" these things[g]; but in their capacity of teachers of religion they addressed their contemporaries as clearly and as forcibly as they do ourselves. Whatever lessons of piety we derive from the perusal of their writings equally belonged to the ancient believer; and on some

[e] 1 Cor. xiv. 3. [f] 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. [g] 1 Pet. i. 12.

points of great importance to the purity and stability of our faith we must still go back to the Old Testament for the most explicit lessons of instruction. If it be, as it is, the fact, that doctrines which in the New Testament appear as elementary principles of religion were, under the old covenant, great discoveries, tardily announced, and to the very end enveloped in some degree of obscurity; it is not the less true that the Jewish Scriptures have their own range of topics on which they enlarge with a copiousness, clearness, and force, which the Apostolic writings, intended for a different purpose, do not exhibit. Thus each great division of the divine word is the complement of the other; each supplies what is wanting in the other; each teaches the same great truths but with a different measure of clearness and expansion; and both combine to render "the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works[h]." Let me specify a few of the points on which the prophetic revelation in its didactic portions especially enlarges.

1. In all, then, that relates to the nature and attributes of God,—His personality, His spiritual being, His holiness, His omnipotence, and His omniscience,—the prophetic teaching is particularly copious and emphatic. It is not the mysterious nature of Deity, as expressed in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, that the prophets disclose; the traces of this mystery in the Old Testament,

[h] 2 Tim. iii. 17.

if indeed such exist, are scanty, and lie beneath the surface; but with unequalled force of thought and language they delineate the perfections of Jehovah as contrasted with the limited powers of man, and the lying pretensions of the gods of the heathen. What the law symbolically taught on these points, the prophets reiterate and expand. The unity of Jehovah was represented by the one tabernacle where alone the national worship could be solemnized; His spirituality by the prohibition of any graven image for worship; His holiness by the necessity of mediation and sacrifice: but these properties are taken up by the prophets, expounded, illustrated, enforced, so as to impress a distinct character on the Jewish faith. Especially is this the case with the Divine personality. The philosophic speculations of antiquity touching the Divine nature, while with just contempt they rejected the gross superstitions of the popular creed, seldom rose above pantheism: they could arrive at the conception of one primary fountain of Deity, but they identified their deity with nature, and so the Divine Being became a mere abstract essence, at once every thing and nothing, not a living, personal, operative, agent. Hence in the ancient mythology, it is never the one invisible God who interferes with the affairs of men; who gives oracular responses, and hears prayer: no sooner does the Divine Essence come forth from the void abyss which is its proper residence, and manifest

itself in action, than it becomes multiplied into polytheism, and appears under the forms of the manifold heathen divinities, to whom the real administration of the world was held to be committed. Altogether different is the God of the Hebrews. The Author and Upholder of creation, He is not one with it; He alone is Jehovah, the self-existent, the unchangeable, while every thing apart from Him is illusory and fleeting; He Himself orders all things in heaven and in earth, and delegates this function of government to no inferior. Hence the strong anthropomorphism of the Old Testament, in which the members of the human body and the passions of the human mind are spoken of as belonging to God; representations which have afforded occasion of scoffing remark to the unbeliever. But let us ask, If God was to be described as a Person and not a mere influence, how could the conception be conveyed save but by ascribing to Him attributes associated in our minds with personality? Our idea of God must consist either of a mere series of negations, or it must clothe itself in analogical terms, (true, however, as far as they are applicable,) drawn from our own consciousness, or from facts around us. And it may be questioned whether, in their laudable desire to vindicate the majesty of the Divine nature, some modern writers have not run the risk of reducing it to an abstract entity with which we can have no affinity, and which therefore can

excite in us no emotions of love, fear, or gratitude: I allude to the speculations which seem to aim at establishing a difference, not merely in degree but in kind, between the divine attributes and the human virtues described by the same names; as if justice, or mercy, or faithfulness, are not merely inadequate, but equivocal, terms, when transferred from man to God[i]. But if this be so, what serious relations can God enter into with man, or, which amounts to the same thing, what knowledge can we have of such relations? However jealously we must maintain the transcendency of the Divine perfections, as compared with those of the creature, we must never forget that man was originally created in the image of God; that the likeness is still not quite effaced; and that therefore there is, and must be, a real conformity of our moral ideas to the infinitely higher, but, in some sense, corresponding attributes of the Most High[k].

Those who have watched the course of rationalistic speculation abroad, will be sensible how needful it is to recur to these elementary lessons of theology, which it is especially the province of the earlier revelation to inculcate. Rationalism in Germany, after passing through various stages of

[i] See Archbishop King's Sermon on Predestination.

[k] Hävernick acutely remarks, that the imperfection of the Old Testament idea of God is, not that it is too anthropomorphitic, but the reverse; that it does not exhibit, as Christianity does, God and man perfectly united in the Person of Christ. Theologie des A. T. p. 53.

decadence, has at length reached that of an unequivocal denial of the Personality of God; and treatises, worthless save as beacons of warning against the tendencies of a purely intellectual religionism, have appeared which, while purporting, with, I suppose, a quiet irony, to unfold the essence of Christianity, start from the fundamental principle that God and man are absolutely identical[1]. Consciousness of God is self-consciousness; the knowledge of God is self-knowledge; the antithesis of the divine and human is illusory, and is nothing more than that between human nature in general and the individual; and consequently the object and the contents of the Christian religion are altogether human;—such are some of the most recent discoveries which continental researches have brought to light. We may well request the ingenious propounders to leave Christianity alone until they have mastered the principles of the earlier dispensation, and to become scholars of the prophets before they appear as critics of the Gospel.

2. Another topic very prominent in the prophetic writings is, the superintending and directing providence of God in the affairs of the world. True it is, that this doctrine appears also in the New Testament, but it is there found under a more special form in its application to Christians

[1] See Feuerbach's Wesen des Christenthums. A translation of this work has been lately published in New York.

as such, as the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. We are assured, and the value of the assurance it is impossible to exaggerate, that "the very hairs of" our "head are all numbered[m];" that "all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose[n];" that as Christians, "all things are" ours, "whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come[o]:" but it is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ whom we are thus taught to contemplate, as interfering not only in the spiritual, but the temporal, concerns of His people. For a view of Divine Providence on a larger scale, as guiding the destinies of nations; raising up mighty conquerors, and determining the parts which they are to play in the great drama; inflicting national chastisements by secondary causes, the sword, the famine, and the pestilence; and, in short, controlling every movement of the mighty and intricate mechanism of human thought and action, apparently free and really responsible, but still working out the Divine counsels;—we must turn to the Old Testament. The God of the Jewish revelation is emphatically the God of history, and no truth is more strongly impressed on the ancient believer than the Divine agency in the distribution of the various events which affect his own condition, or that of neighbouring nations.

[m] Luke xii. 7. [n] Rom. viii. 28. [o] 1 Cor. iii. 22.

It is not merely that Jehovah foresees what is to be, and communicates this knowledge through the prophets, but that He vindicates to Himself a part in the planning and accomplishing of the issues of futurity, and tells His people that nothing happens without His appointment: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things[p];" "See I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant[q]." As the gloomy, or gorgeous, pictures of prophecy pass in review before us, we are admitted behind the scene to see the unseen power that is secretly at work; in whose hands the visible actors are but instruments, the unconscious agents of Almighty wisdom and power. We are never permitted to forget that the apparently tangled threads, intersecting each other in all directions, which make up the life of an individual, or the existence of a state, or the whole course of the world, all run up eventually into one hand, which, with unerring exactness, traces each separate one from the commencement to the end, and directs the whole in combination to one great result.

This consolatory truth is never indeed without its use; and the Christian, amidst the vicissitudes of the world, the tumults of war, the threatening aspect of public affairs, recurs with peculiar satis-

[p] Is. xlv. 7. [q] Jer. i. 10.

faction to the repeated assurances contained in the prophetic writings, that the world is governed neither by fate nor by chance. But we, to whom the full revelation of a future life has been vouchsafed, in which all inequalities shall be rectified and all difficulties explained, can form little idea of the support and consolation which the doctrine of universal providence must have proved to the pious Jew, who was taught by his law to regard temporal prosperity, both national and individual, as a mark of the Divine favour, and to whom the veil that hides the unseen world was but partially uplifted. Contrast with his privilege in this point the melancholy condition of the heathen moralist. In place of an omniscient and omnipotent Being, upon whose goodness and justice perfect reliance might be placed, fate, superior to Gods and men, held all things in its chain, and with stern and inexorable aspect cast a gloom upon the whole scene of human life. But in the sequestered valleys of Judæa, different and better notions prevailed. Amidst the convulsions of political revolution around him, and the visitations of calamity which befel the chosen nation itself, the mind of the perplexed believer was restored to tranquillity by the knowledge that his covenant God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, presided over every change, administered every stroke of chastisement, and out of apparent evil was eliciting substantial good.

3. Once more, it is one of the characteristics of the prophetic teaching, that it expounds the full meaning of the moral law, and assigns to moral duties their proper place of superiority as compared with the ceremonial precepts. The direction which prophecy takes is, as compared with the earlier promulgation of the Law, manifestly less corporate and more personal; less external and more spiritual. In the earlier revelation of Moses it is to the nation as such that the promises and threatenings of God are addressed; the individual is merged in the body; and even in the book of Deuteronomy, which presents, in the point of predominance of moral exhortation, a great advance upon its predecessors, the religion enjoined is more national than personal. But the prophets address themselves directly to the concerns of personal religion. The Law had declared the efficacy of national repentance to avert, or alleviate, the consequences of national transgression; the language of prophecy on the same subject is, "I dwell in the high and holy place, with *him* also that is of a contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones[r]." The consolatory promises of God to the penitent are, as every reader will have observed, no longer the property of the nation as such, but of the pious portion of it, the mourners in Zion; who, oppressed by a sense

[r] Is. lvii. 15.

of individual and national sin, and frequently the subjects of persecution from their unbelieving brethren, needed, and received, the consolatory assurance that they, and not the mere carnal descendants of Abraham, were the inheritors of the blessing promised to the patriarch and his seed, the special objects of God's providential care and tender mercy.

With what energy the prophets denounce the legal formalism which affected a scrupulous compliance with the ritual, while neglecting the gravest duties of the moral, law, is known to all the readers of them. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord. Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and the sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow[s]." The tendencies of human nature in every age are the same, and we, not less than the Jews of old, need to be reminded that God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth; but we can perceive, in this comparative depreciation of the ritual of the Law, a remarkable, and no doubt designed, adaptation

[s] Isa. i. 11—17.

to the circumstances of the Jewish Church in the chief age of prophecy. For at that period the first covenant began to draw to its close. The temporal condition of the Jewish people, when the earliest writer[1] in the prophetic canon flourished, was no longer what it had been in the reigns of David and Solomon; and before its close, the main part of the nation had been dispossessed of its earthly inheritance, while the portion that remained was expiating its sins by a seventy years' captivity in Babylon. Amidst the apparent failure of the covenant, and especially when, Jerusalem and the first temple being in ruins, it might well seem to the pious Jew that God had altogether cast off His ancient people; when, in fact, the process by which the interior Judaism, or Christianity of the Old Testament, was to be extricated from its external shell, had commenced, and was advancing to its consummation; how suitable and consolatory to the afflicted people of God was the intimation conveyed by the prophets, that this interior religion—the worship of the heart, the faith of a humble and contrite spirit—is alone of any real estimation with Him; that the temple services and the ceremonial law, the observance of which was, during the period of invasion and exile, necessarily interrupted, were, in their own nature and essentially, inferior in value to inward, personal, piety; and that whether the worshipper

[1] Jonah B.C. 825.

were in Judæa or in Babylon, if only the heart were right with God, the substantial, because spiritual, blessings of the better covenant were his.

Such was the tenor of prophecy in its didactic aspect: let me ask whether any similar instance can be found of a series of teachers extending over a period of several centuries, whose instructions, on the greatest topics that have occupied the human mind, uniformly tend to the same edifying result? Did the state of intellectual or social cultivation among the Jews, at any period of their history, supply the materials for such an unusual elevation of religious and moral sentiment as their prophets exhibit? Can we suppose this body of doctrine to have been elaborated from the ordinary resources of reason? None who are acquainted with the most successful efforts of the foremost philosophers in the most polished states of antiquity, will be inclined to think so; and rather than adopt such an improbable hypothesis will fall back upon the explanatory statement, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God[u]." For setting aside, for a moment, the matter of the prophetic teaching, let us consider its manner. It is stamped with the ethical character which belongs to the whole economy. Speculations which do not bear on practice it sedulously avoids; the dreams of a poetical imagination which are so readily substituted for habits of piety find no place in it: it is a law of life, delivered with the dignity

[u] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

and authority which befits a message from God. Which even of the most practical treatises on morals which time has spared us from the mass of heathen literature can compete, in impressiveness of style, in power of appeal to the conscience, in a severe yet consolatory strain of admonition, with the productions of the Hebrew teachers? In what light the Jews themselves regarded their prophets is well known. They turned a deaf ear to their instructions, they put them to death, but they never denied their divine mission. The credentials were too plain to be rejected; and notwithstanding the natural tendency that must have existed to suppress, or interpolate, or mutilate, writings which display the nation in such an unfavourable light, such was the force of the conviction of their divine origin, that no attempt of this kind is ever recorded to have been made.

I would only add on this head, that a progressive tendency in the religious teaching of the prophets is perceptible; I mean, that in proportion as larger disclosures are made of the doctrines peculiar to the Gospel, the preceptive portion of their writings assumes a more inward and spiritual complexion. Thus the Psalms contain a more perfect portraiture of individual piety than the books of Moses; and the Prophets, properly so called, particularly the writings of Isaiah, advance still further in the same direction[v]. A

[v] See Mr. Davison's remarks, Discourses on Prophecy, pp. 44—47.

consideration which is not unimportant in determining our views of the true character of the Christian dispensation.

II. I proceed, in accordance with the method proposed, to consider briefly the leading points which the prophetic revelation, in its anticipatory notices of the Gospel, took up, and on which it enlarged. I would observe, however, that we cannot here distinguish absolutely between prophecy as didactic and prophecy as predictive; for the teaching of the prophets plainly bore, in reference to Christianity, an introductory character, and their predictions were not without a present use. By the glimpses which prophecy unfolded of a better covenant, and a glorious future, in store for the ancient Church, a more extended range of ideas and subjects of hope than his present condition could supply was presented to the mind of the pious Israelite; and he was trained to look upon his peculiar relation to Jehovah, and the privileges of his nation, as but of temporary duration, destined to merge hereafter in blessings of a higher nature, and of wider application. How necessary it was that the Jewish mind should thus be led beyond the appointments in being appears from the fanatical and narrow spirit which became the characteristic of the people in later times, and which led them to suppose that to their nation, however corrupt, was appropriated the peculiar favour of heaven, to the exclusion of

all others. These predictions too must have tended to support a failing faith under circumstances of outward trial, and, even when carnally interpreted, to maintain the nation in its allegiance to Jehovah.

But to come to the Christian predictions themselves:—perhaps a brief sketch of the course of prophecy under the three heads of the person and work of the Redeemer; the doctrine of eternal life with its proper complement, the resurrection of the body; and the nature of Christ's kingdom; will, for our present purposes, suffice.

1. No sooner had man fallen, than a hope of recovery was held out to him, and absolute despair was never the portion of our race. But the first announcement of redemption was couched in the most general terms. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise its heel[x]." The principle of interpretation by which our Christian knowledge is transferred to the earlier periods of revealed religion; which makes the Jew to have enjoyed a clear insight into the typical references of his ritual, and to have exercised an explicit faith in the Redeemer; has been at work in the case of prophecy also: and has discovered in this passage more than can be fairly shewn to be expressed in it. But in estimating the amount of information conveyed,

[x] Gen. iii. 15.

at the time, by any prophetical communication, we must not consider what may be implicitly involved in it, still less what may have been present to the Divine mind to which the end was manifest from the beginning, but what the words would naturally convey to those to whom they were addressed. In this instance, all, I conceive, that could have been clearly gathered is, that a two-fold seed, of opposite character, should henceforth exist in the world at enmity with each other; but that the power of evil should eventually be broken, and the effects of the fall reversed, by the seed that should spring from the woman. Whether an individual or a race were meant[y], and if the former, whether he was to be more than man; by what means the victory was to be achieved; and whether the effects of it would be simply to

[y] The word זֶרַע, though properly a collective, can be used for an individual (Gen. iv. 25.); but in Gen iii. 15. the context does not determine which sense we are to adopt. It may be better therefore to understand it as applying neither to the Redeemer, nor to the holy seed, the Church of God in the world, alone; but to both inclusively: just as St. Paul speaks of Christ as being Abraham's seed to whom the promises were made (Gal. iii. 16.), while the original passage (Gen. xii. 7.) plainly speaks of the patriarch's descendants. In the Apostle's mind the true seed of Abraham was identified with Christ their Head. Compare 1 Cor. xii. 12; "As the body is one and hath many members—so also is Christ," i. e. Christ and His Church. Thus understood, the first prophecy simply announces a victory, with suffering, of the woman's seed (Christ and His people) over the powers of darkness.

reinstate man in his former position, or advance him to a higher one; the prophecy did not specify. To our first parents it must have conveyed little beyond a general prospect of deliverance from the consequences of sin.

But the stream soon begins to flow in a particular channel. The call of Abraham is accompanied with the promise that from his offspring the promised Deliverer should descend, and that all the families of the earth should be sharers in the blessing. But a cloud of obscurity still rested on this divine oracle, and if Abraham in any special sense saw the day of Christ, as we are assured he did[z], it must have been by means of a peculiar revelation which has not been transmitted to us. The tribe of Judah is next singled out as that from which the Messiah should spring[a]: and finally it was promised to David that in his seed the kingdom should be for ever established[b]; any ambiguity in which promise is removed by the clearer statements of subsequent prophecy, that there should "come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots," upon whom

[z] John viii. 56.

[a] Gen. xlix. 10. Whether in this prophecy we retain the punctuation שִׁילֹה and translate it, Prince of peace, (Hengstenberg, Christologie i. p. 68; Gesenius s. v. prefers the abstract, "peace;") or, with the ancient interpreters, write the word שֶׁלּוֹ, that is, "until He come, to whom the sceptre belongs;" is immaterial: in either case the reference to Christ is beyond doubt.

[b] 2 Sam. vii. 12—16.

"the Spirit of the Lord should rest[c];" that the Lord would "raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King" who should "reign and prosper;" in whose days Judah should "be saved, and Israel dwell safely," and whose name should "be called, The Lord our Righteousness[d]."

Thus was the human nature, the birthplace, and the lineage, of the promised Saviour fixed by the Divine Word; and another series of predictions instructed the ancient believer to look for, not merely the Seed of the Woman, and the Son of David, but Jehovah manifest in the flesh, David's God and Lord. In the person of David, and the other sacred lyrists of Israel, prophecy assumed a particular form, under which it made large accessions to the faith of previous ages. It consisted, partly in enlargements upon former, more general, predictions, and partly in typical applications of the circumstances of the writers to the higher purpose of delineating the principal facts of the Messiah's history. It is in the former class of prophetic Psalms that we find the first intimations of the exalted nature of the promised Saviour. Of the great Theocratical King who should occupy the throne of David, the divine testimony was, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee[e];" "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever[f];" "The Lord said unto my Lord,

[c] Isaiah xi. 1.
[d] Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.
[e] Psalm ii. 7.
[f] Psalm xlv. 6.

Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool[g]:" while the glory of His kingdom is described in terms far too elevated to be applied to David's or Solomon's empire at its highest pitch of splendour[h]. The later prophets take up the theme, and present us with combined views of the twofold nature of the Messiah. "A virgin" was to "conceive and bear a Son, and call His name Immanuel[i];" "unto us a Child" was to be "born, unto us a Son given," who should bear the appellation, that is, should be, "the mighty God[k];" from Bethlehem was to proceed "the Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting[l]:" and one of the last of these predictive notices announces in express terms, that "the Lord," whom the pious Israelites sought, should "suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant[m]," in whom they delighted.

The offices and atoning work of the Saviour are in like manner gradually unfolded to the view. Moses directed the attention of the people from himself to that greater Prophet, whom God should raise up to declare His will[n]; while the Psalms establish His eternal Priesthood[o], and the great facts which preceded His assumption of the sacer-

[g] Ps. cx. 1. [h] See Psalms ii. xlv. lxxii. [i] Is. vii. 14.
[k] Is. ix. 6. [l] Mic. v. 2. [m] Mal. iii. 1.
[n] Deut. xviii. 15—18. [o] Ps. cx.

dotal office, His resurrection from the dead, and His ascension to heaven[p]. The idea of suffering had been from the first connected with the victory over the serpent's seed, but only in the most general manner; the Psalms take up this subject, and the afflicting circumstances in which David, on several occasions, found himself are, under the Divine inspiration, so expressed as, in the most striking manner, to correspond with the historical incidents of the Saviour's cross and passion. But in these delineations, it is not stated either that Christ's sufferings should be consummated in death, or that they should possess an expiatory power. To supply the omission was the province of later prophecy. "He hath borne our grief and carried our sorrows;—He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; He hath poured out His soul unto death, and He bare the sin of many[q];" to these revelations of the great Evangelical Prophet respecting the atoning sacrifice of Christ little in the way of clearness could be added, even by the simple historical statement of Daniel, that after the lapse of a fixed time, "Messiah" should "be cut off, but not for Himself, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness[r]."

[p] Ps. xvi. 8—10. lxviii. 18: compare Acts ii. 25—31. and Ephes. iv. 8. [q] Is. liii. 3—12. [r] Dan. ix. 24—26.

Thus were communicated, one by one and gradually, all the leading doctrines which centre in the Saviour's person and work; each successive age of prophecy adding something to the completeness of the description, and presenting a more definite object to the faith of the ancient Church: until at length by the advent of "the Sun of righteousness[s]" Himself every cloud was dissipated, and the full effulgence of a finished redemption streamed over a fallen world.

2. With the increasing light vouchsafed from age to age on the method of redemption, the promulgation of the doctrines of eternal life and of the resurrection of the body kept pace: just in proportion as the one subject became more distinctly defined, so does the other; and not earlier. Let us endeavour to trace, briefly, the course of revelation on this great topic. There is no reason to believe that man, though destined to live for ever, was created incapable of death: on the contrary, his immortality depended upon a condition, that of partaking of the tree of life in Eden. Deprived of this sacrament, as it has been called, of life, he became subject to death; and from that time till the Saviour Himself, by His doctrine and His resurrection from the dead, illuminated the regions of the unseen world, a shade, more or less gloomy, rested upon man's prospects after this life.

[s] Mal. iv. 2.

"That the old fathers did" not "look only for transitory promises[t]," we learn from inspired testimony[u]; and that "both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life," so far as it is offered at all in the former, "is offered by Christ[x]," is most true: but the revelations on which the "old fathers" grounded their expectations of future bliss have not been recorded, and to suppose that an esoteric doctrine on this point was handed down by tradition involves many difficulties. These divine communications, when given, were probably, as in the case of Abraham and Enoch, the rewards of eminent piety, and confined to the individuals thus distinguished. No public declaration on the part of Him who alone could clear up the mystery appears as part of the primitive revelation. Nor, as has been previously observed, does the law of Moses make mention of any save temporal sanctions. Under these circumstances, gloomy or cheerful views of the state of the soul after death (for the future existence of the soul was never doubted) prevailed, according to the strength of the believer's faith; but on the whole, the former were most common. While occasionally, as in Psalm xvi., the inspired writer, soaring on the wings of hope, looks forward to his eventual release from the bands of death, the common language in the prospect of dissolution is that of despondency, and gloomy pictures are

[t] Art. VII. [u] Heb. xi. 13—16. [x] Art. VII.

drawn of the other world. The place of departed spirits is represented as a subterranean cavity or pit[y]; a place of darkness and silence[z]; "a land of forgetfulness," where there is no remembrance of God, and no expectations from Him[a]. It is in this life that the pious Jew of that age enjoys fellowship with God; in the temple services, and in the earthly blessings of the covenant: beyond it lies an impenetrable mist which no mortal eye can pierce. Such, I conceive, is for the most part the meaning of expressions frequently occurring in the Psalms, and from which it has been argued that the writers must have enjoyed a clear prospect of eternal life[b]; I allude to the passages in which, under circumstances of separation from the temple or of affliction, a hope is expressed of future recompense and satisfaction from the presence of God. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness;" "With Thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light;" "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory;" "When shall I come and appear before God[c]?": it is on texts like these that the

[y] שְׁאוֹל; not, probably, from שָׁאַל, to ask, but from שָׁאַל i. q. שָׁעַל to be hollow. See Gesenius, s. v.

[z] Job x. 21. Ps. lxxxviii. 12.

[a] See Ps. vi. 5. and xxx. 9.

[b] Graves, on Pentateuch, Part iii. Lect. iv.

[c] Ps. xvii. 15. xxxvi. 9. xlii. 2.

opinion alluded to has sought for a foundation. But it may be questioned whether they really express more than either a desire of restoration to the covenanted presence of God in the temple, or a firm confidence that God would in this life appear for the deliverance of His servants from temporal calamity. Let it be remembered, that the Jewish dispensation was one of sight not of faith, one of present not of future covenanted blessings: to a pious Israelite therefore in the age of David, before the temporal dispensation had begun to be shaken, or any oracle of prophecy delivered bearing distinctly on a future state, fellowship with God, and the favour of God, must have been, for the most part, associated with *local* nearness to the place where Jehovah dwelt, and with the experience of *present* divine benefits. And let it be remembered, that the essential elements of religion,—faith, hope, and love,—might find room for exercise as well on the earthly objects presented to the Jew as on the heavenly ones revealed to the Christian; for the truth of religion consists, not so much in the motives by which it is sustained, as in the truth of its object and of its sentiments; the motives, in the shape of reward or punishment, may be very scanty and limited, while the duty and the sentiments remain the same. It may be a question then whether a greater measure of spiritual light in the point under consideration, has not been ascribed to the

Psalmists of Israel than they actually enjoyed; though most true it is that their language, under the guidance of inspiration, is so framed as to express the highest aspirations of Christians; more, in fact, than the writers themselves intended; and so we can now make use of their compositions in the exercises of public and private worship. If from the lyrical effusions of Hebrew sacred literature we turn to writers who formally discuss the subject, or to cases in which death was actually in prospect, we find the colours of the picture assuming their usual sombre tint. The language of the Book of Ecclesiastes is, if not hopeless, solemn and doubtful: "All go unto one place; all are of dust, and turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" "The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward;" "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest;" "The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it[d]." More than two hundred years later, even after Hosea had delivered the great prophecy to which St. Paul, speaking of the general resurrection, seems to allude[e], Hezekiah, in the immediate prospect of death, gives utterance to similar sentiments: "The

[d] Eccles. iii. 21; ix. 5, 10; xii. 7. [e] 1 Cor. xv. 55.

grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day[f]." Such, according to the extant evidence, appears to be the state in which this capital article of our faith was for a long period left.

Not but that hints were given from which a reflective mind might have *surmised* a state of happiness hereafter in the presence of God. Of such a kind were the translations of Enoch[g] and Elijah[h]; and perhaps the declaration from which our Lord refuted the Sadducees, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;" though it is by no means certain that before this inspired comment was given, the truth which the passage involved could have been discovered[i]. If the well-known text in the book of Job is rightly interpreted of a proper resurrection from the dead, it must have given encouragement to others to entertain a like confidence of hope; though it must be allowed that there is a difference between the expressions of a strong faith, and a positive announcement on the part of God. The latter was still wanting. Nor was the want fully supplied until Christ Himself "brought life and immortality to light," by declaring, with the au-

[f] Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. [g] Gen. v. 24. [h] 2 Kings ii.

[i] See Mr. Davison's remarks on this passage, Discourses on Prophecy, p. 126.

thority of a teacher sent from God, that the hour was "coming in the which they that are in the grave shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation[j]."

It must not be supposed that the condition of the Jews was worse in this respect than that of their heathen neighbours, or that the absence of express allusions to a future state in the Mosaic revelation places it in an unfavourable light, as compared with uninspired systems of religion. The same natural inducements to belief which gave rise to the pagan notions of Elysium and Tartarus the Jew possessed, and they were not contradicted, but rather aided, by the tenor of his law; while in the solemn silence which the inspired records preserved on the condition of the soul after death, the fancies of imagination, or that frivolity of temper which could sport with such a subject, found no nutriment. Of what real value was the pagan faith, if it can be called so, as a motive to virtue? What seriousness of mind did it inspire, either among people or philosophers? The range of early Jewish speculation on a future state may have been limited, but at least it was free from the debasing elements which mingle so largely in the traditions of other nations of antiquity: to the heathen death was a natural event,

[j] John v. 28, 29.

to the Hebrew it was the penalty of sin; and the unknown existence to which it led became invested in his eyes with a painful and solemn interest, which must have produced a far greater practical effect than the fantastic details of pagan fable.

With the commencement of the principal age of prophecy the subject begins to open, and distinct notices appear, not merely of the separate existence of the soul after death, but of the much more distinctive doctrine, the resurrection of the body. In several passages of Isaiah[k], in the remarkable vision of Ezekiel[l], and, above all, in the unequivocal announcement in the book of Daniel, "that many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt[m]," the pious Israelite could not fail to see the doctrine of the resurrection implied, if not distinctly expressed; and from these notices, and not, as Warburton supposes, from pagan sources, the general belief of the nation, as we find it in our Lord's time, no doubt took its rise. Some degree of obscurity, however, still hung over the subject; especially as regards the nature of the resurrection-body. That the body will rise again had become a settled point; but it was still "a mystery," a thing formerly hidden but now revealed, that

[k] See especially chap. xxv. 8; xxvi. 19.

[l] Ezek. xxxvii. 1—12.

[m] Dan. xii. 2.

though "we shall not all sleep, we shall all be changed;" that "this corruptible" shall "put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality[n];" a change the pledge of which was exhibited, and not before, in Christ's own glorious transformation, and respecting which we have the assurance, that "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is[o]."

On the whole, on an impartial survey of the facts of the case, we shall probably be led to take a middle course between the exaggerated views that have been put forward on either side of this question; between the strange assertion of Warburton, that "the doctrine of a future state never once appears to have had any share in this people's thoughts[p]," and the theology which in this as in other points would place the Jew on an equality with the Christian. How the eminent writer just mentioned could have hazarded such a statement it is difficult to say; so far from its being correct, the subject of a future state seems, if we may judge from those books of Scripture which especially pourtray the feelings of the writers, to have deeply exercised reflective minds under the ancient economy. Whatever the results may have been at which they arrived, it cannot be said that the subject was not frequently in their thoughts. On the other hand, it must be confessed that their state of mind, in the contemplation of the last

[n] 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53. [o] 1 John iii. 2. [p] Div. Leg. b. v. §. 5.

enemy, was far removed from that which the Christian enjoys. "They were all their life-time, through fear of death, subject to bondage[q]." Arrived at the boundary of human existence, they looked forward into the abyss of a vast eternity, not indeed wholly unilluminated, for here and there a promise, or a prophecy, like stars suspended in the dark firmament, shed a cheering ray; but the radiance of all the nocturnal lights of heaven together cannot compensate for the absence of the sun, and the ancient believer ventured into the comparative obscurity upheld rather by an implicit faith in the Divine goodness and mercy, than by any specific prospects of what awaited him in those unknown regions.

3. A very few words must suffice on the third head under which the Christian prophecy arranges itself, the prophetical notices of the future kingdom of the Messiah.

In describing the approaching Gospel dispensation, the prophets, as might be expected, enlarge upon the promised extension of the blessings of true religion to the Gentiles: the comprehensiveness of the new covenant, as contrasted with the restricted and local character of the existing one, is spoken of as one of its main characteristics. But this expansion is to place on the basis of existing arrangements. "Thou shalt break forth," is the promise to Zion, "on the right hand and on

[q] Heb. ii. 15.

the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles[r];" "in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts[s]." What meaning are we to attach to these predictions? The Jews, as we know, interpreted them literally and carnally; Messiah was to be a temporal prince, who should restore the kingdom to Israel[t], and compel the nations to acknowledge His universal sway: a large section of the Christian body likewise interprets them literally, and accordingly reproduces in the Christian Church a visible counterpart of the Jewish appointments of priesthood and sacrifice. Of the latter error I shall have occasion to speak hereafter; but with respect to the former, it is strange that such misconceptions respecting the nature of the Gospel kingdom should have prevailed, when prophecy had clearly marked out in what sense the Theocracy was to be perpetuated under the reign of Christ. For it is no longer the nation in its corporate capacity to which the prospect is held out of a future enlargement by the coming in of the Gentiles; the Zion which is the subject of these prophecies is described as "a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit," as "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted[u]," as needing consolation at the hand of the Lord, and not chastisement. It was

[r] Is. liv. 3. [s] Mal. i. 11. [t] Acts i. 6.
[u] Is. liv. 1—6; lii. 2.

the "holy seed[x]," therefore, the posterity of Abraham not merely after the flesh but after the spirit, that was to "break forth on the right hand and on the left," and ultimately to form, in conjunction with the olive branches graffed in from the Gentile world, one spiritual body under Christ its Head, one kingdom the essence of which should consist, not in worldly splendour or external characteristics, but "in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost[y]." In short, that part of the covenant with Abraham which related to temporal promises having been fulfilled, and now approaching its termination, the other part of it, which spoke of spiritual blessings, began to come into view, and to merge into the future Gospel covenant, from which, by the intervention of the Law[z], it was temporarily separated, but with which it was, in reality, one. And the features of this latter covenant, new in one sense but old in another as being, in fact, prior to that of Sinai[a], are such as these:—It was to usher in an era of light and truth as distinguished from the preceding one of type and symbol[b]; it was to be accompanied with an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit, whose gifts, instead of being confined, as heretofore, to a few, were to be bestowed in rich abundance, and promiscuously[c];

[x] Is. vi. 13.

[y] Rom. xiv. 17.

[z] Νόμος δὲ παρεισῆλθεν, ἵνα πλεονάσῃ τὸ παράπτωμα. Rom. v. 20.

[a] Gal. iii. 17.

[b] Is. xl. 5—9. lx. 1—3.

[c] Joel ii. 28. Is. xxxii. 15.

an effectual atonement for sin, and a cleansing of the heart, of which the legal sacrifices and lustrations were but the shadows, were to be amongst its provisions[d]. My hearers will for themselves fill up from Scripture the outline thus given: I content myself with adducing one passage in which all the characteristics of the Gospel dispensation seem summed up. "Behold the days come," is the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, "that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, though I was an husband to them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more[e]."

And thus I conclude this inadequate sketch of the nature of the prophetic function, and of the principal contents of the volume of prophecy.

[d] Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. xi. 19. [e] Jer. xxxi. 31—34.

If I have succeeded in describing these contents aright, it will be seen that a perfect harmony exists between the lessons which the law taught by symbol, and those which prophecy more directly enunciated; that each illustrates the other, and both combine to direct us to Him who was at once their Author and their Object. The survey of some of the principal of the Mosaic institutions which has now been completed, suggests many practical reflections. Perhaps the most obvious, but not the least important, is, the responsibility which the possession of spiritual privileges brings with it, and the danger of unfruitfulness under the means of grace. "What could have been done more to my vineyard," was the just complaint of the Owner, "that I have not done in it?" but when "He looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes[f]." The nation, as such, entirely fell short of the blessing proposed to it; but the failure was owing to no lack of means and appliances on God's part, but to an obliquity of temper on man's, which neither mercies nor chastisements could rectify. "And now, go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor digged: but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command

[f] Isaiah iv. 1—4.

the clouds that they rain no rain upon it[g]." The past and present history of the Jewish people, in their unexampled sufferings, their dispersion, and their humiliation, is the best comment upon this threatened judgment; monuments of the severity, as they once were of the goodness, of God, they illustrate the principle, that "unto him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath[h]." Yet by a wonderful Providence they have been preserved, we trust for a brighter destiny yet to come. The admonitory lesson will be lost upon us who occupy their place, as the people of God, if it lead us not, individually and nationally, to prize more highly, and cultivate more faithfully, our spiritual advantages, and the talents committed to our charge; talents bestowed not to be buried in a napkin, or to be misapplied to the purposes of selfish indulgence, but to be employed in the service of the gracious Giver; talents not our own, but lent to us as stewards, and for the due cultivation of which we must give account at the day of Christ.

[g] Isaiah v. 5. [h] Matt. xxv. 29.

LECTURE VI.

Rom. ii. 28, 29.

He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

In the preceding discourses the Mosaic economy has been considered under its external aspect, as a system intended to operate on the Jew from without inwards, and expressive of the ideas proper to true religion; in this point of view the Theocracy in general as a polity, and its two principal institutions, the ceremonial law and prophecy, have successively engaged our attention. I proceed, according to the arrangement indicated in my first discourse, to make some remarks on the Jewish religion in its interior features, or, to inquire into the effect actually produced on the pious part of the nation by the various appliances of discipline and instruction which it was its privilege to enjoy.

That a preparatory process in this sense, as well as in a more outward and historical one, was needed to facilitate the merging of Judaism into Christianity is obvious: there needed to be present, when the Saviour should appear, not merely written oracles of prophecy, and a typical system, to which He might appeal as testifying of Himself, but a people waiting for the consolation of Israel, hearts prepared to welcome His arrival: it was not enough that a Theocratical institute should be erected to shadow forth Christian verities, but that elements of Christian sentiment, so far Christian as to enable us to recognise in the pious Israelite one with whom we can hold communion, should be at hand to coalesce with the distinctive work of the Spirit under the Christian economy. That an ulterior effect of this kind was contemplated is confessed. He was "not a Jew," was not what his privileges and institutions were intended to lead to, who was one outwardly merely; who remained, without progression, in the state in which the Theocracy took him up; instead of yielding himself to its influences so as eventually to become a Jew inwardly, a spiritual as well as earthly descendant of Abraham. Such a result is implied in the very notion of a school of training, under which the Mosaic economy is represented to us in the New Testament; for no system of education is intended to terminate in itself, it looks forward to a future enlarged sphere

of action, in which the habits and capacities acquired in the more elementary one may find their application.

We know that, in point of fact, the Theocracy, in every age, contained within its bosom those who loved and feared God. The gracious purposes of Divine Providence in framing this system, though grievously thwarted by man's perverseness, were not wholly frustrated; if the nation in general proved unfaithful and forfeited the blessings of the covenant, the holy seed never entirely failed; and at one of the darkest periods of religion, when the prophet gave utterance to the too hasty conclusion, that he only remained of the servants of God, he was surprised, and reproved, by the announcement, that there were 7000 left in Israel who had not bowed the knee unto Baal. Throughout the course of Jewish history the twofold line of Abraham's posterity,—the mere outward circumcision, and the circumcision of the heart,—is traceable; existing side by side under the same visible polity, but distinct in character; just as now the members of the true Church are found commingled in each local Church with those who are Christians but in name. "They are not all Israel," St. Paul tells us, "which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God,

but the children of the promise are counted for the seed[a]." It is the religion of this part of the nation, the true Israel, that I purpose to pourtray, while I endeavour to describe the process by which the Christianity of the Old Testament, in its inner aspect, was gradually drawn forth and matured, "until at length it only needed the joyful εὑρήκαμεν of a Philip to bring the Israelite without guile to Christ[b]."

But when we speak of religion as not merely an external revelation, but a sentiment of the heart, we naturally revert in our thoughts to that divine Agent from whom all holy desires and all good works proceed; and thus I am led, from its connexion with the subject of the present discourse, to introduce here some observations on one of the most obscure, but at the same time interesting, questions connected with the discussion in which we are engaged, viz. how far spiritual influences were vouchsafed under the Law, and what the difference is, if there be any, between them and the gift of the Spirit which is peculiar to the Gospel.

I have had occasion, more than once, to observe, that the Law contained no promise of the Holy Spirit as part of its covenant blessings; but it cannot, nevertheless, be a matter of doubt, that under the Law spiritual influences were vouch-

[a] Rom. ix. 6—8.

[b] Twesten Dogmatik, i. p. 304. See John i. 42—46.

safed. We may argue this from the facts of the case, and from the statements of Scripture. From the facts of the case; I mean, from the ascertained existence of religion, as distinguished from mere morality, under this dispensation. As soon as this fact is established, we may at once advance to the conclusion that supernatural aids were present. For it is the doctrine of Scripture, and of our Church, that "the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God[c];" if therefore these exercises of piety had, under the old covenant, a place, they must have proceeded from a supernatural source. Whether we suppose that a certain amount of spiritual assistance was vouchsafed to the nation as such, (as we now speak of the ordinary influences of the Spirit bestowed upon the Church collectively,) which it was the piety of some to cherish, and the sin of others to stifle; or that grace was communicated, as before the Law, here and there to individuals; is immaterial: enough that in every case in which spiritual, as distinguished from natural, sentiments prevailed, it is the Spirit of God to whom we must ultimately refer the result. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God[d];" a solemn truth which, in these times and under present circumstances, it especially becomes us to

[c] Art. X. [d] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

lay to heart. No improvement of the race in knowledge, in civilization, in moral sentiment, can ever bridge over the gulph which separates the natural from the spiritual, the first Adam and his posterity from the second Adam and the new creation in Him: there is a fundamental difference between morality, however exalted, and religion; between the world, however ameliorated by Christian influences, and the Church. Before fallen man can rise into this higher sphere of life, he needs the communication of a spiritual principle from above, which, specific in its quality, leads to specific results.

But Scripture also teaches us, that the ancient dispensation was not without its appropriate spiritual influences. I speak not of the recorded communications of God to the Patriarchs, nor of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the Prophets, for these were exceptional and intermitted illapses; but of a permanent, and ordinary, operation of Divine grace. From the Pentateuch itself we should hardly, I think, have gathered that this was the privilege of Israel; but later Scriptures mention it as having been so from the first. Thus Isaiah speaks of the backsliding people as having "vexed" the "Holy Spirit[e];" Nehemiah, of God's having given "His good Spirit to instruct them[f]:" Stephen, in his address, reproaches the unbelieving Jews with their habit of resisting the Holy Ghost;

[e] Is. lxiii. 10. [f] Neh. ix. 20.

"as your fathers did," he says, "so do ye[g]:" to which passages we may, perhaps, add the statement of St. Paul in his typical application of the water from the rock at Horeb, "they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ[h]." It has been argued too, and perhaps not without reason, that the command to love and fear God implies the grant of grace sufficient to render obedience possible, since the divine Lawgiver is not a hard Master, reaping where He has not sown, and gathering where He has not strawed; but it would hardly be safe to lay much stress on this consideration, for it might have been part of the painful but salutary discipline under which the Jews were placed, to be subject to the demands of the Law without possessing, or knowing that they possessed, a title to corresponding spiritual power.

But while we have every reason to believe that God never left His people destitute of the assistance of His Spirit, it seems equally clear that in this point Scripture recognises a marked distinction as existing between the two dispensations. The prophets announce that the last, or Gospel times, should be distinguished by an outpouring of the Spirit such as had never been before vouchsafed, remarkable both for its energy and its universality[i]: our Lord promises His disciples that, after His ascension, the Comforter should be sent to abide

[g] Acts vii. 51. [h] 1 Cor. x. 4. [i] Joel ii. 28—32.

with the Church for ever, which implies that, in the sense intended, He had not as yet come; and St. John, in recording an allusion of Christ to the same subject, expressly tells us, "that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified[k]." The striking circumstances under which the fulfilment of the promise took place, the rushing mighty wind and the cloven tongues of fire; and the miraculous gifts which accompanied the descent of the Holy Ghost, and which were evidently intended to impress upon the early Christians the importance of the event; corroborate these statements, inaugurating as they plainly did a change in the divine administration, a new era in the economy of grace. Of the difference between the gift of the Spirit under the Law and under the Gospel thus generally stated, various explanations have been offered, more or less satisfactory.

Thus by some it has been maintained, that the promise of Christ is satisfied, and has been fulfilled, by the gift of the Christian Scriptures; those Scriptures in which, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the nature and sanctions of the new covenant are revealed for the benefit of the Church in all ages. A theory which, however supported by some learned and some pious names[l], seems so inadequate to sustain the weight of the Scripture

[k] John vii. 39.

[l] See Bishop Heber's Bampton Lectures.

statements alluded to, that it may be dismissed without any lengthened notice. We cannot indeed estimate too highly the advantage we possess over the Jew in the more perfect revelation of God's counsels and will vouchsafed to us; nor can we fail to recognise in the word of God, first preached and then recorded by the Apostles,—in its power to vanquish opposing influences, in its triumphant progress throughout the world, in the effects it produced on the heart and life,—the sword of the Spirit, the visible instrument of such an effusion of spiritual power as had not hitherto descended upon the Church. But we are inquiring not into the *effects* of the divine gift, but into the nature of the gift itself; contemplating not the breadth and fulness of the streams, but the source whence they took their rise. It is not a preached or a written word, but a Person, that was promised to take the Saviour's place upon earth; the rivers of living water to which our Lord compared the future influences of the Spirit were to be, not outside or around the believer, but in him; and, moreover, such an interpretation would leave no essential difference between the two dispensations, for the Old as well as the New Testament Scriptures were written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Nor does their view seem nearer the truth who conceive that the gift of the Spirit peculiar to the Gospel consisted in the miraculous powers bestowed upon the first converts, such as those of

healing, of tongues, or of prophecy. For, in the first place, these sensible operations of the Spirit were not, as we know from the event, to continue in the Church, whereas our Lord plainly speaks of an abiding blessing; and in the next, they cannot be called peculiar to the new dispensation, inasmuch as similar ones, however in comparison scantily or occasionally dispensed, existed under the old.

Nor again does it seem a satisfactory solution of the difficulty to suppose, that a greater measure of sanctification is now attainable than was the case under the Law, and that thus St. John's statement may be explained. The fact itself is not so clearly made out. The sanctification of a fallen creature consists so much in conviction of sin, and the sentiments connected therewith,—humility, faith, resignation,—that we cannot safely draw conclusions as to the measure of sanctity from either remarkable excellencies or signal blemishes in the outward life. Let me not be misunderstood; the test, "by their fruits ye shall know them," is the only one on which we can ultimately rely in discriminating between those who are led by the Spirit and those who are not: but what I mean is, that isolated acts either in the one direction or the other afford no certain evidence of the inward state in the sight of God. We can no more gather from the lamentable fall of David, for example, that he was inferior to the

Christian in general holiness of character, than we can from the heroic deeds of a Barak, a Samson, or a Jephthah, which yet, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, are ascribed to faith, that they were eminent saints. It is very possible, however, that this may be among the points of superiority which distinguish the Gospel from the Law; and certain it is that in the New Testament, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, we have a portraiture of the Christian character which not only presents a general standard of practice to which nothing in the Jewish Scriptures can be compared, but is marked by special features for the first time brought out into view: and as the standard is higher, so the measure of sanctifying grace may be greater. But, even if this be the case, it will hardly account for the strong expressions of Scripture on this subject, which seem to intimate that the difference between our condition and that of the Jews, in the point under consideration, is more than one merely of degree. "The Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

These considerations have led some to suppose that the distinction lies, not in the degree or nature of the gift itself, but in the formality of the conveyance[m]. Remarking that in the passage just cited the word "given" does not exist in the original, they interpret it of the revelation of the Personality of the Holy Ghost, and His covenanted

[m] Whately, Essays on St. Paul, Essay IX.

presence in the Church; the Spirit was not yet revealed as the permanent Ruler of the Church, His influences had not yet been made the subject of covenant or promise. And no doubt we have here a marked difference between the two dispensations. I believe it will be found, that, however *suggestive* many statements of the Old Testament may be on the subject of spiritual influences, the passages are very few in which there is express mention of the Holy Spirit: and certainly His aids, not to speak of His presence, formed no part of the stipulated advantages of the Jewish covenant. But in their rendering of the passage, our translators were undoubtedly right, and the word "given," or something equivalent, must be added to complete the sense. For our Lord, in the preceding verse, speaks, not of a revelation or of a promise, but of an indwelling presence; out of the inner man of the believer "shall flow rivers of living water;" with which the corresponding passage in the fourth chapter may be compared, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." The theory in question therefore, correct as far as it goes, leaves it still undetermined how far, or in what respects, the state of the Christian, as regards an actual communication of spiritual influence, differs from that of the Jew of old.

It is with some degree of hesitation that on so difficult a point I venture to throw out the fol-

lowing observations. Perhaps then the special connexion which Scripture establishes between the gift of the Spirit peculiar to the Gospel dispensation and the Incarnation and subsequent Ascension of Christ may furnish a clue to the solution of the difficulty: "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men[n];" "The Spirit was not given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Every blessing of the new covenant, however prefigured under the Law, comes to us in *effect* through Christ, in whom, and in whom alone, promise, and prophecy, and type, receive their accomplishment. Now just as there was no perfect atonement for sin, no actual recovery of the forfeited gift of eternal life, until Christ died and rose again; so until He ascended to heaven in His glorified body, it is conceivable that there may not have existed the peculiar indwelling of the Holy Spirit which makes Christians members of Christ; so really, however spiritually, members, that the Apostle does not hesitate to say, "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones[o]." Let me dwell awhile on this point, which, if I mistake not, deserves our attention, as likely to throw some light on the subject. It was a new, and important, step of progress in the work of redemption, when the Holy Ghost made the human nature of our Lord His habitation; when, both

[n] Psalm lxviii. 18. [o] Ephes. v. 30.

by the miraculous conception and the subsequent descent of the Spirit, the body of Jesus became, in the highest sense of the words, a temple of the Holy Ghost. Hitherto, it was a temple of human structure, a building, in which Deity had manifested His presence; and in this only by symbol, the bright cloud which filled the tabernacle: if man had been the subject of such a spiritual inhabitation, it was only, as in the case of the prophets, for special purposes, and therefore temporarily and irregularly[p]; while ordinarily the impulses of the Spirit came from without, and operated upon the soul sufficiently for the purposes of sanctification, but without a permanent indwelling. But now, in Christ, our nature became the chosen abode of Deity, and, as it should seem, specifically of the third Person of the Holy Trinity: "I saw the Spirit," is the record of the Baptist, "descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him[q]." But though the Saviour thus at the commencement of His ministry received the formal inhabitation of the Spirit, He was not to become a source of life to us, until redemption had been actually effected: the corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, before it could bring forth fruit: hence the comparatively small effect of our Lord's personal ministry on earth. The right to bestow

[p] So Bezaleel was "filled with the Spirit of God" to frame the furniture of the tabernacle. Exod. xxxi. 3.

[q] John i. 31.

spiritual blessings must be purchased, and that right must be publicly acknowledged by the Ascension and Session of Christ at the right hand of God, before the plenary effusion of the Spirit, characteristic of Gospel times, could take place: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you[r]." But when this event had taken place, and leading captivity captive the Victor, in our nature, assumed the reins of universal dominion, and entered upon the exercise of His mediatorial functions, as Prophet, Priest, and King, then the promise of the Father and of the Son was fulfilled, and on the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Christian Church, the rushing mighty wind was heard, and the cloven tongues of fire appeared, and the assembled disciples were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

In what respects was their spiritual condition affected by this descent of the Holy Ghost? In the first place, they became, as Christ had been made, temples of the Holy Ghost; an expression, which, familiarly, as we know, applied to Christians, is never, as far as I am aware, used of those who lived under the ancient economy. The human nature of Christ, the second Adam, the Head of the new spiritual creation, having received this privilege, those who are united to Him by a living faith receive it too; their bodies become the

[r] John xvi. 7.

temples of the Spirit[s]; God dwells in them as He never did in man before, as a distinct Personality; they are not merely moved from without by spiritual influences, as pious men of old were, but the Spirit takes up His abode in them, working from within outwards, a fountain of living water pouring forth its refreshing streams around to heal and to fertilize. And in the next place, the gift thus bestowed on the day of Pentecost seems, in the New Testament, associated peculiarly with the eternal Sonship of the Saviour. Here indeed we find ourselves enveloped with the clouds which surround the throne of God, and all we can do with safety, in speaking of the Holy Trinity, is to adhere as closely as may be to the usage of Scripture. And, in the present instance, this usage appears to be, that while in the Old Testament the phrase is, the Spirit of God, or the Spirit of the Lord, in the New we have the additional idea of the Spirit of Christ, or the Holy Spirit viewed in immediate connexion with, and proceeding from, the glorified Saviour[t]. May we suppose, merely as an aid to

[s] "It ought to be kept in mind, that it is only to Christians *collectively*, that is, to the Church, that this term (Temple) is applied. Individual Christians are called 'living stones,' but never 'temples.'" Whately, Sermon, "Christ the only Priest under the Gospel." The writer must surely have forgotten the passage, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" (1 Cor. vi. 20.), where the context compels us to understand, "Each of your bodies, &c."

[t] St. Peter (I. i. 11.) speaks of "the Spirit of Christ" as having been in the prophets; but it is to be remarked, that

the conception, and not with any view of founding a dogmatical theory on the supposition, that the influences of the Divine Spirit, after having gradually interpenetrated the human nature of Jesus, carrying it forward from one degree of glory to another through the various stages of birth, life, and resurrection, at length, the process being by the Ascension completed, overflowed their receptacle;—like the precious ointment on the head that ran down upon Aaron's beard, even unto the skirts of his clothing;—and descended in plentiful effusion on the members of His mystical body? Whatever notion we may form on the subject, it was not, it should seem, without reason that the Western Church deemed the original Nicene Creed, in its statements on the third Person of the Trinity, an inadequate expression of the faith, and to the procession from the Father added that of the Son. For, however imperfect our conceptions of such high mysteries may be, it is no small addition to the Christian's faith, no small consolation to him, to know that the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit that dwells in him, uniting him to the exalted Saviour so vitally, so closely, that he may be said to be one with Christ, one as the branches are with the vine, the members of the body with the head, expressions quite peculiar to the New Testament; and be-

it is the revelation of Christ's "sufferings, and the glory that should follow," to which he specially alludes; so that the idea of an incarnate and glorified Saviour still connects itself with the expression.

cause one, a sharer in the glory bestowed upon Christ as the first-begotten among many brethren; an heir of God because a joint-heir with Christ[u]; already, by anticipation, an occupant of the heavenly places whither Christ is gone before[v]; and an expectant of the same glorious transformation when his mortal body shall be raised "because of[w] the Spirit that dwelleth in" him, and the corruptible shall put on incorruption, the mortal immortality.

Hence perhaps is to be explained the peculiar language of the New Testament on the subject of divine influences; language which, without determining whether it *could* have been used or not under the legal dispensation, we may safely say does not, in point of fact, occur in the Old Testament. To one instance of this kind I have already alluded, that in which Christians are called temples of the Holy Ghost; but there are others not less distinctive and significant. Thus we read of "the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father[x];" of "the Spirit" bearing "witness with our spirit that we are the children of God[y];" of "the Spirit Himself making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered[z];" of "the love of God" being "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us[a];" of God's revealing unto us "the things which He hath prepared for

[u] Rom. viii. 17. [v] Ephes. ii. 6.
[w] Rom. viii. 11. The marginal rendering.
[x] Rom. viii. 15. [y] Ibid. 16. [z] Ibid. 26. [a] Rom. v. 5.

them that love Him," "by the Spirit," who "searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God;" of the spiritual man's "judging all things" because he has the very "mind of Christ[b]." The Church of England at one period of her history laboured under such a chronic dread of enthusiasm on the subject of spiritual influences, that she was in danger of sacrificing to this dread the very pith and marrow of the Gospel; as appears by the rather jejune interpretations of such passages as the foregoing, which may be found in the works of some of our divines, especially of the close of the seventeenth, and of the early part of the last, century. In their case this proceeded from the reaction against Puritanism; but it should awaken a suspicion of the adequacy of these interpretations, that both Rationalists and Romanists are prone in a similar manner to lower the sense of the passages in question: the former from their tendency to annihilate the distinction between nature and grace, the latter from their instinctive aversion to any thing approaching the doctrine of assurance, or justification by faith in its interior aspect, which, they feel, interferes with their theory of absolution, and of the priestly power. No want perhaps is more urgent than such a connected view of the influences of the Spirit, under the new economy, as shall at once give their full force to the statements of Scripture on the subject, and yet guard against the excesses

[b] 1 Cor. ii. 9—16.

to which, by being misunderstood, they have given rise. At present, our observations must be limited by the subject in hand. I would observe then, that it is neither a mere influence, nor a mere work of sanctification, that is spoken of in such passages as those just now cited. It is not merely that the Christian is moved by the Spirit to pray, and assisted in the performance of the duty; not merely that from a reflex observation of the fruits of holiness which the Spirit has enabled him to bring forth he gathers that he is a child of God, (the result of such observation could never be wholly satisfactory, for as the Christian grows in grace, he becomes proportionably alive to the imperfections of his best services;) not merely that the love which God has to him, (for such no doubt is the correct interpretation of this passage (Rom. v. 5.), and not the other according to which it is our love to God of which the Apostle speaks,) may be inferred by the Christian from the provisions made for his salvation; these may be, and are, truths necessary in their place, but in the present instance they but inadequately express the mind of St. Paul. His words bear no lower meaning than that the unutterable aspirations of true prayer are the very voice of the Spirit Himself, dwelling in the Christian, and employing the human spirit as His organ; and that the same Spirit, through the same organ, testifies to the believer his acquittal from condemnation, and his adoption into the family of God, filling him with joy and peace, not

in the contemplation of the fruits of faith, but in the act of believing[c]. Nor need we fear to enunciate these sublime and consolatory truths, lest they should be abused, as long as we hold fast the scriptural and protestant notion of justifying faith, which, as distinguished from the mere historical belief to which the Roman formularies give the name of faith, contains in it the element of trust and dependence, under a sense of sin, and though not to be identified with, is never separable from, sanctification. And I cannot but observe, in passing, that this peculiar operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian supplies the proper answer to the objections which Romanists and others are in the custom of urging against the protestant, or, as it is sometimes called, the forensic, view of justification. The objection is, that we make justification merely an external matter: God imputes righteousness to the believer, but this righteousness is in Christ; God declares the believer free from the guilt of sin, (*justum pronunciat,*) but only as a judge pronounces the acquittal of a criminal, without any accompanying internal result[d]. But this is an imperfect, and erroneous, view of the subject. It is true that justification, as distinguished from sanctification, consists in an imputation, a declaration, of righteousness, but this never remains a mere external act on the

[c] Rom. xv. 13.

[d] Moehler, Symbolik, p. 138. Bellarmine, De Justif. l. ii. c. 7.

part of God; for by the Spirit the divine acquittal, the divine adoption, which, in Scripture, is promised generally to believers, is proclaimed in the inner man, and becomes a matter of individual consciousness. The Spirit sheds abroad in the heart the love of a reconciled God; the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, not by an audible voice, or by excited animal feeling, or by enthusiastic impressions apart from the word of promise received in faith, but by the peace, the inward joy, the sense of sonship, which He infuses. And it is particularly to be remarked, that this work of the Spirit is not in itself sanctification, but the root and source of sanctification. For the Gospel method is, not as Rome would have it, to attain forgiveness of sin through holiness, but to attain holiness through forgiveness of sin: first, the guilt must be blotted out through faith in a crucified and risen Saviour, and the assurance of the divine reconciliation shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit; and then the Christian, delivered from the spirit of bondage, and in the spirit of a child, impelled by gratitude for undeserved mercy, and love for prior love, proceeds to do those "good works which God hath ordained that" he "should walk in them[e]." And because the sense of reconciliation, the assurance of God's pardoning mercy, is not the fruit but the source of Christian holiness, it is not to be

[e] Ephes. ii. 10.

regarded as a privilege of the advanced Christian only; rather is it to be placed at the threshold of the Christian life, to be connected directly with faith, and to be expected and cherished from the first, as supplying our best, I may say our only, vantage ground for cheerfully encountering the trials of our course, and the assaults of our spiritual enemies.

Before I quit this point I may remark, that the question, how far regeneration existed under the Law, is but the same, under another form, that has been occupying our attention. Protestants, especially of the reformed as distinguished from the Lutheran type, have, owing to the reaction against the sacramental system of Rome, been unwilling to admit any difference between the regenerate Jew, and the regenerate Christian. We cannot be too much on our guard against the errors of the so-called sacramental system; especially its notion of a physical union with Christ's manhood by means of the Sacraments, as if the manhood of Christ in particular were the source of grace to Christians, and as if Sacraments were the only means of union with Christ[f]; but this need not prevent us from discriminating where Scripture appears to lead the way. Regeneration in the sense of "a new heart and right spirit," must of course have existed no less under the Law than under the Gospel; for with this, its essential

[f] See Wilberforce on the Incarnation, passim.

aspect, salvation is connected, and salvation belonged to the pious Jew not less than to the Christian. But in its specifically Christian sense the term possesses a deeper meaning; deeper exactly in proportion as the gift of the Spirit under the Gospel is superior to that which belonged to the Law. For it is this divine agent who is the Author of regeneration; and in proportion to the fulness and peculiarity of His indwelling, will be the higher or lower sense of the term by which we describe its commencement. Now it should seem from Scripture, that even the pious Jew needed to be "born of water and the Spirit," not before he could be saved, but before he could enter the kingdom of God, or the Christian economy[g]. Of His own forerunner, John the Baptist, our Lord declares, that, though no greater had arisen among those that are born of women, "he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he[h];" not merely, I conceive, from the superior knowledge which the humblest Christian, as compared with the saints of the old covenant, enjoys, but from the higher mode of the Holy Spirit's indwelling under the Christian dispensation. Of these saints John was one of the greatest, but he did not possess, nor could he confer, the baptism of the Holy Ghost[i]; this was His privilege in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who out of that fulness can

[g] John iii. 5. [h] Matt. xi. 11. [i] Matt. iii. 11.

communicate to His people, and grace for grace[j]. The regenerate man now is "born of the Spirit;" "Christ" is "formed in him[k];" "to as many as received Him, to them gave He power" (rather, as the margin has it, the right or privilege, a privilege they did not possess before) "to become the sons of God[l]:" in short, Christian regeneration involves the idea of incorporation in Christ, (by which, of course, we are not to understand any thing physical,) an idea which we may conclude does not belong to the ancient economy, from the fact that the language expressive of it is not found in the Jewish Scriptures.

My limits forbid me to pursue the subject further; but I trust enough has been said to indicate, at least, the true points of distinction between the gift of the Spirit under the old and under the new dispensation. How far our privilege transcends that of the Jew is easily seen. The latter may, indeed must, have had sanctifying grace; but it does not appear that he possessed that higher fellowship with God which flows from the indwelling presence of the Spirit as a Person, pleading in the heart, speaking peace to the agitated conscience, testifying to the privilege of adoption through union with Christ, and the pledge and earnest of the resurrection of the body. These, my brethren, are our distinguishing blessings; may they be duly prized, and cherished! May

[j] John i. 16. [k] Gal. iv. 19. [l] John i. 12.

the heavenly Guest never be induced, through our indulgence of known sin, or neglect of known duty, to diminish, perhaps to withdraw, His gracious influences! How strongly to us Christians does the admonition come home, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption[m]!"

And now, to return from what however I trust will not be considered a digression, let us endeavour to trace the process by which, under such a measure of spiritual influence as then existed, the loyal and docile portion of the Jewish people was led on from the rudiments of religion, to some maturity of preparation, in sentiment and feeling, for the coming of Christ. Drawn towards his heavenly Benefactor by an earthly redemption, and earthly blessings, the Jew, unless morally depraved, could not but love God who had done such things for him, could not but fear God who in the destruction of the oppressor had so signally manifested His almighty power. These sentiments, however natural, were in some sense spiritual also; for even the inclination to reflect on the goodness and greatness of God must have been the result of a spiritual operation, however feeble, on the heart[n]. Under their influence the upright Jew would cordially yield himself to be wrought upon by the external system of training under which he was

[m] Ephes. iv. 30.

[n] "Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things spoken of Paul." Acts xvi. 14.

placed. He would abstain from forbidden sins, and endeavour to walk in "all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless[o]." And now would commence a twofold development of the religious sentiment, in the direction of a more spiritual system. A serious and reflective mind would, in the first place, begin to extricate the spirit of the Law from the letter; to supply from independent reflection what the letter had not prescribed; and, above all, to assign to the various precepts their relative importance. Let us recur, for a moment, to the analogy of ordinary education. In the case of untoward natures the efforts of the teacher may be of no avail, as the Mosaic system in reference to far the greater part of the Jewish nation produced no fruit: with natures, from whatever cause pliant and docile, they will probably succeed, and the evidence of success will be the formation of an inner sentiment, which to the individual will abrogate the oldness of the letter; will dictate, more or less spontaneously, what, under changing circumstances, is the proper course of action; will become competent to deal with points which the written code has left untouched; and among its rules to distinguish which are the more and which the less important. In short, we consider a system of education to have failed which does not issue in moral and mental *habits* as distinguished from a mere mechanical

[o] Luke i. 6.

obedience to literal precepts. It is thus that the mass of floating sentiment, which we call national character, is the result of the gradual operation of the laws by which the nation is governed; though it is also true that laws are the expression of the national character: there is, in fact, a process of action and reaction constantly going on; the external enactment giving a direction to the national sentiment, and the latter again producing such enlargements, or modifications, of the enactment as circumstances may require; or sometimes even abrogating the original letter to make way for a fitter expression of the spirit embodied in it. There is no reason to doubt that a somewhat similar process must, in the case of the pious Jew, have taken place. By degrees more enlightened perceptions would take the place of the rudimental ideas of an earlier age: the nature of God, and of true religion, would become better understood; the ceremonial law would resign the place of superiority to the moral; the state of the heart would become a point of consideration, and it would come to be felt that obedience and mercy are better than sacrifices however costly. And once the process commenced, it would continue. For religion, when, as in the present case, its fundamental conceptions are just and true, is essentially progressive; developing surmises into matters of belief, bringing to light doctrines before unnoticed, and handing down the stock of truth

which belongs to each generation to a succeeding one, to be added to or corrected.

Now had this tendency stood alone, it would probably have issued in a mere philosophical latitudinarianism, such as became, centuries later, the characteristic of Alexandrine Judaism. According to Philo, the best representative of his class, the mission of the Jews was to be prophets and priests of mankind. The law of Moses contained the germs of all that the ablest philosophers had taught, only it needed an enlightened mind to discover the hidden treasure, to extricate the kernel from the husk. Of this illumination philosophy was the instrument. Too much stress must not be laid on the letter, the grammatical exposition, of the law; the ceremonies must be lightly passed over. The stern, peremptory, tones; the vigorous anthropomorphism; the prevalent ethical tendency; of the Old Testament, must be softened down to render Judaism palatable to heathen philosophers, whose speculations had commonly little to do with the practical direction of life[p]. The fatal defect of this phase of Judaism was, that the Mosaic religion became with it not a means but an end: Philo and his school cherished no higher anticipations respecting the destiny of his nation, than that the law, in Alexandrian guise, should go forth from Jerusalem, and make all men disciples

[p] For an account of Philo's views, see Neander, Church History, i. p. 61—77.

of Moses. The expectation of a personal Messiah, whose reign should inaugurate a new state of things, this, the central idea of the ancient Theocracy, became lost in cold abstractions. So vague, so rationalistic, a view of the Old Testament Scriptures could supply no historical basis for Christianity; and the sects in which it prevailed proved less susceptible of the Gospel than the Pharisees themselves, who, corrupt as they were, were the representatives of orthodox Judaism, and sat in Moses' seat. From this danger the genuine Theocrat, the true descendant of Abraham, was preserved by a leading sentiment of his religious life, which grew up simultaneously with that just mentioned, viz. conviction of sin.

The reader of the Old Testament will perhaps have observed, not without surprise, how little this sentiment, the very basis of *our* religious experience, mingles in the religion of the early patriarchs. The intercourse of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, with God appears to have been marked by a childlike simplicity of faith, but not, as far as appears, with any overpowering sense of God's holiness and their own sinfulness: Job justifies himself before God, and needs a special communication from heaven to convince him that he is vile. This is quite in analogy with what we see in the earliest period of human life. The religion of a young child seldom exhibits a deep sense of sin; this painful, but salutary, discovery belongs

to a riper age, when the powers of reflection become matured, and self-oblivion gives place to the consciousness of personal implication in moral evil. The primitive fathers of Scripture history were, as regards religion, in a state of spiritual childhood, and exhibit the simple unconsciousness proper to such a state. But the introduction of the law produced a great change in this respect. "By the law" came "the knowledge of sin[q];" "The law entered that the offence might abound[r];" not merely that the righteousness of God in permitting death to reign over all men might be vindicated[s], but that men might become alive to the corruption of their nature, of which, in the absence of a written law, they were likely to remain in ignorance. Now the ceremonial law, as was observed in a preceding Lecture, did indeed visibly teach the lessons of man's sinfulness in the sight of a holy God, but, from its nature, it could not produce conviction of sin; it exhibited the truth that man, owing to his natural pollution, cannot directly approach the Divine Presence, but it could not reveal to the conscience the extent of the righteousness which God requires. This office belonged to the immutable moral law; incorporated, as we must suppose, for this very purpose in the national code, and a provision quite peculiar to this economy. In ordinary political legislation, the insertion of the moral law is obviously out of

[q] Rom. iii. 20. [r] Rom. v. 20. [s] See Rom. v. 13.

place, and is never attempted; but the divine Lawgiver of the Jews entertained ulterior purposes, and the national constitution was, in this as in other instances, framed in reference, and subordination, to the one great object of preparing the way for the advent of the Saviour. Now in proportion as the full spiritual import of the moral law became, in consequence of gradually advancing illumination, unfolded to the Jew, so would his consciousness of failure to come up to its requirements increase: the attributes and character of Jehovah would begin to stand out in painful contrast, if not with the outward life, with felt inward pravity of will: the holiness required of the creature would come to be measured by the holiness of the God who required it: the childlike love and trust towards an earthly benefactor, beyond which the religion of an earlier generation seems hardly to have advanced, would give place to graver apprehensions and painful struggles of mind, and the more so, the more the foundations of the outward Theocracy appeared to be shaken by temporal visitations: and thus the indispensable groundwork of all true religion, a broken heart and contrite spirit, a longing for deliverance from the spiritual thraldom of sin,—dispositions equally removed from the mere speculative temper of the Alexandrian school, and the gross formalism of the Pharisee,—would become the prominent characteristic of the pious Jew. Great, in this point, was the advan-

tage of the Jew in possessing the oracles of God. The heathen world, having no knowledge of the divine law except what might be gathered from the faint traces of it "written on their hearts," and attested by the accusing and excusing voice of conscience[t]; having no express revelation of it which they could not modify or adulterate; fell into the natural course of lowering the requirements of the Law so as to come within the capacities of fallen human nature. Hence in the ancient systems of practical philosophy, whether as applied to individuals or communities, confidence in the powers of unassisted human nature is the conspicuous and fatal defect; as it is also in the Christian socialism, and its parent the philosophic religionism, with which we are now threatened. From this error, so destructive of all true religious sentiment, the Jew was preserved by his possessing an objective standard of duty, which might indeed by corrupt minds be explained away, or superseded by human glosses, but which could not be obliterated from the written record; where it remained for the instruction and conviction of those (doubtless not a few in every age) who, under serious impressions of religion, had recourse to the divine word, with a sincere purpose of understanding and obeying the will of God therein revealed.

Simultaneously with this feeling of immeasurable distance from what the true Jew ought to be,

[t] Rom. ii. 15.

would develope itself a sense of the weakness and imperfection of the Levitical appointments. That they were to be placed below the moral law in point of intrinsic importance the worshipper had already perceived; but now he would feel that, as atoning ordinances, they were in themselves ineffectual. "They could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience[u];" and the cleansing of the conscience was what, with his growing spiritual perceptions, he would chiefly crave. The Law, like a friendly physician, had drawn forth to the surface the hidden corrupt humours which were festering within, and now the cry would be, in the words of one who himself had experienced this conflict of mind, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death[v]?" to which the existing economy could give no satisfactory reply. And thus whatever hopes of a future better atonement the ceremonial law, or the earlier hints of prophecy, may be supposed capable of suggesting, would be eagerly embraced, and the attitude of expectancy become that especially characteristic of the pious Israelite.

Is the picture we have been drawing altogether an imaginary one? Or can we gather from Scripture that what we have supposed to be the natural progress of religion, in its interior character, is that which actually took place? One

[u] Heb. ix. 9. [v] Rom. vii. 24.

book there is which is not only a manual of instruction vouchsafed to the ancient Church, but a portraiture of the religion of the authors; in which the inward life of the pious Israelite is laid open to the view under a variety of aspects. Let the book of Psalms be perused simply as a record of spiritual experience, and, if I mistake not, the direction of religious sentiment will be found to have been such as I have described it. From the structure of these compositions we might expect that the sorrows and joys, the temptations and deliverances, of the individual believer, rather than the fortunes of the nation, would form the staple of their argument, that religion would here be represented under a personal, rather than a corporate, character; but the features of this personal religion are just what we should have expected them to be. Take but one specimen, the fifty-first Psalm: the Psalmist feels that God requires "truth in the inward parts," but that he himself "was shapen in iniquity," as well as guilty of actual transgression; he implores not only the pardon of his sin, but "a clean heart, and a right spirit;" he knows that the legal sacrifices are, in his case, of no avail, and that under any circumstances "a broken and contrite heart" is the sacrifice in which God chiefly delights; yet he does not despair of mercy, and seems, through the veil of the present, insufficient, appointments, to discern a better atonement of

which they were suggestive; "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Such was the religion of the pious Israelite before the chief age of prophecy commenced; exhibited no doubt, in this instance, under special circumstances, but fully corroborated by the general tenor of the book of Psalms. It is essentially Christian in character; the difference being that the objects of faith are but imperfectly apprehended, and that the fair blossoms of piety are still sheltered by the outward fence of the Law, lest in their comparative immaturity they should perish by exposure.

It is needless to remark, that the lessons which the Jew had thus gradually learned would be fixed, and improved upon, by the moral teaching of the prophets. For the very same cast of religious sentiment which the Psalms exhibit,—the felt superiority of a moral to a legal righteousness, a sense of sin, a humble reliance upon God's faithfulness and mercy,—is, as was observed in the preceding discourse, in prophecy stamped with the Divine approval; and the faithful follower of Abraham was thus assured, that the direction which his religion had assumed was not a wrong one, but had the explicit sanction of God. And at this point it is that, as I conceive, the typical import of the Mosaic ritual, as distinguished from the merely symbolical, must have begun to disclose itself to a reflective mind. For how stood the

case with the Jew in the later period of his history? On the one hand, the Law had attached to the Levitical sacrifices the power of atonement; "I have given it (i. e. the blood) upon the altar to make atonement for your souls;" "on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord;" expressions which can by no means, I apprehend, be limited to purely ceremonial offences. On the other, both the Psalms and the Prophets speak in depreciation of these sacrifices, while the fact of their repetition year by year, and the natural progress of religious knowledge, must have convinced the worshipper of their inherent insufficiency. It seems as if the contradiction could hardly have failed of arresting attention; and how could it be explained? Plainly only on the supposition of a future effectual sacrifice, apart from their connexion with which the Mosaic sacrifices were worthless, but from their connexion with which they derived an atoning virtue. That such is the explanation of the apparent discrepancy we know; but what I would observe is, that it was no difficult matter for the Jew to arrive, from independent reflection, at some insight into the truth. And when to this we add the prophetical delineations of the Messiah's office of vicarious atonement, couched, as in Isaiah liii, in terms drawn from the legal sacrifices, their

minds must have been dull, and their hearts slow[x], who were not able to connect law and prophecy together, and surmise an Object in whom both should be fulfilled.

Thus amidst the ruins of the visible Theocracy did the inner Theocracy of the Spirit gradually develope itself, and become more and more distinct in character as the advent of the Saviour approached; and so inwardly as well as outwardly was the way of the Lord prepared. A contrite spirit, a longing for deliverance from both the guilt and the power of sin; trust in the promises of God; and a hope of future redemption; such was the general frame of mind which the discipline under which he was placed tended to form in the ancient believer. The Law indeed having conducted its disciple thus far could do no more for him; for further advancement it must resign him to a more efficient teacher. What Moses began, Christ came to perfect. Yet the religion of the Christian differs in degree only, not in kind, from that of his predecessor under the old covenant; the same essential elements which in a heightened form, corresponding to the fuller measure of knowledge, and of spiritual influence, vouchsafed, are found in the former, belong also to the latter. In the Jew who was one inwardly we see all the lineaments of the Christian character, though not as yet the perfect image; and thus by

[x] Luke xxiv. 25.

the inner bond of the spiritual life not less than by the external one of history and the written word are the two dispensations connected, and pass the one into the other. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth[y]." What life does the Christian more wish to live, what death to die? We recognise in such confessors a true portion of the body mystical of the Lord; one with us in the essential unity of the Spirit; one in hope and destination; and hereafter, at the manifestation of the sons of God, to form, with us, one redeemed Church, in which there will be "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ" will be "all, and in all[z]."

[y] Heb. xi. 13.

[z] Col. iii. 11.

LECTURE VII.

Acts xv. 21.

For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every sabbath day.

It is generally admitted that our Lord came, not merely to promulgate certain doctrines, or to establish an unseen fellowship of the Spirit, but to found a visible society, or rather visible societies, in which the doctrines should be professed, and the invisible unity of the Spirit outwardly manifested: Christianity, in short, was to possess, not merely a religion, but a church. During His earthly ministry, Christ more than once intimated that His followers were to form associations among themselves[a]; and before He left the world He appointed the two visible ordinances, one of which marks the commencement, the other the continuance, of fellowship with Himself and with His people. When on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended, the apostles and disciples were assembled together; and thenceforward it was

[a] Matt. xvi. 18; xviii. 17.

the rule of the divine administration to "add to the Church," the existing society of Christians, "such as should be saved[b]." Moreover to the Church thus constituted was committed the charge both of perpetuating itself, and of evangelizing the world; the unseen influence of grace which makes men Christians operating not independently, but in the use, of the appointed means, the preaching of the Word, Christian instruction, and the Sacraments.

The next step therefore of the inquiry in which we are engaged is to examine whether any, and what, preparations were made, during the continuance of the ancient dispensation, for the visible establishment of Christianity in the world; whether, as the great facts and doctrines of the Gospel were prefigured by the Law and foretold by prophecy, so anticipatory arrangements may be discerned in Jewish history for the foundation of the Christian Church; by that term being meant the aggregate of local societies which collectively constitute visible Christendom.

Now it is antecedently probable that some such preparatory provision would be made, for it was obviously the intention of the divine Author of both dispensations that they should pass the one into the other without any abrupt changes, just as childhood gradually gives place to manhood, or the bud expands into the flower. And

[b] Acts ii. 47.

I have failed in my object if the preceding discourses have not, in some measure, shewn how the religion of the old covenant, both in its external and internal aspect, approximated more and more to that of the new, until at length nothing could be more natural than for the pious Jew to become a Christian. We see this principle exemplified in the particular ordinances adopted by Christ to be the distinctive notes of His Church; for they were not, either of them, as regards the outward sign, new ones: baptism, in one form or another, had long been in common use among the Jews, and it was from among the ceremonies usual at the well-known feast of the Passover that our Lord selected one to become the sacrament of His body broken, and His blood shed, for the sins of the world. It would be strange then, if, in the matter of church-polity, a similar shading off of the Law into the Gospel could not be traced; if Christianity had found nothing at hand wherewith to connect itself in the visible aspect which it was to assume. That a special providence in this as in other points prepared the way for the advent of Christ I hope to be able to shew in the present discourse, in which I propose to make some observations on the Jewish Synagogue, and its connexion with the Christian Church; a subject of great importance in every point of view, and which does not seem to have received the attention which it deserves.

The Babylonish captivity produced great and

permanent changes in the temper and social condition of the Jewish people. From this period is to be dated the abhorrence of idolatry, and the unsocial spirit, which attracted the attention of heathen historians; characteristics by no means those of the nation in earlier times. About this time also the doctrines of a future state and of the resurrection of the body appear more distinctly in the popular creed; a result brought about, partly by the visible failure of the first covenant in its temporal provisions, and partly, no doubt, by the increasing light which prophecy threw upon these great subjects. But no change was more striking, or more pregnant with important consequences, than the rise and progress of the synagogical, as distinguished from the temple, worship; which, according to the best authorities[c], is to be ascribed to the period of which we are speaking.

To what extent any system of regular religious instruction prevailed in the earlier ages of the Jewish commonwealth cannot be exactly determined. We know that Moses enjoined that the Law should be read in the hearing of the people every seventh year at the feast of tabernacles[d]; that it was the office of the Priests and Levites to expound its meaning in doubtful cases[e]; and

[c] Vitringa, de Synag. Vet. l. i. p. 2. c. 12. Prideaux, Connections, p. i. b. 6.

[d] Deut. xxxi. 10, 11. [e] Deut. xvii. 8, 9.

that the Levites were dispersed throughout the land, for the purpose, no doubt, of forming centres of knowledge to the rest of the people. It has already been observed, that the schools of the prophets must have tended to promote the study of the word of God. But it seems probable that in the disordered state of public affairs under the judges, and many of the kings, these provisions for public instruction were suffered to fall into abeyance: that gross ignorance sometimes prevailed, may be gathered from the surprise of Hilkiah the high priest at the discovery of the book of the Law, and the consternation of Josiah on hearing its contents[f]. Such a state of things is obviously incompatible with the supposition of its being at that time the practice to form assemblies for the purpose of hearing the Law read and expounded. To the synagogue therefore, properly so called, we cannot assign a higher antiquity than some period subsequent to the Babylonish captivity: and this event sufficiently accounts for the rise of the institution. The exiles "by the waters of Babylon," deprived of the temple services, endeavoured to supply the omission by such religious exercises as still remained within their reach. They prayed with their face toward Jerusalem[g]; they came together, when opportunity offered, to hear at the mouth of a prophet words of consolation and instruction.

[f] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14—19. [g] Dan. vi. 10.

More than once in the book of Ezekiel we find mention of such assemblies, presided over by the prophet himself, and consisting sometimes of the elders[h], and sometimes of people and elders together[i]. Restored to their native land the Jews continued these weekly assemblies, the homiletic services of which would be the more valued when the gift of prophecy was withdrawn. In the book of Nehemiah we have an account of a religious service, which presents a close resemblance to what afterwards became the stated worship of the synagogue: Ezra the Scribe ascended a pulpit of wood, read portions of Scripture, which (since the ancient Hebrew was no longer understood by the people) were interpreted by persons appointed for the purpose, and the whole concluded with prayer and thanksgiving[k]. The service on this occasion took place in the open air: the first erection of buildings for the purpose of holding the weekly sabbath assemblies is probably to be ascribed to the extra-Palestine Jews, whose example however was speedily followed by their brethren in Judæa; and synagogues so multiplied, that in Jerusalem alone, in our Lord's time, there are said to have been, though we cannot but suspect that the number has been exaggerated, 480 of these structures[l].

The remarkable dispersion of the Jews which

[h] Ezek. xiv. 1; xx. 1. [i] Ezek. xxxiii. 31. [k] Neh. viii. 1—8.
[l] Vitringa De Synag. Vet. i. p. 2. c. 12.

took place after the captivity[m], produced a corresponding diffusion of the new mode of worship. At that feast of Pentecost which witnessed the descent of the Holy Ghost, there were found in Jerusalem, "Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven[n];" who, by these stated attendances at the principal festivals, maintained their connexion with the temple, the centre of the national polity and worship; while in the particular localities in which they resided, they were fain to content themselves with the simpler devotions of the synagogue. And thus in every considerable city of the Roman empire, Jews, and Jewish synagogues, were, at the time of Christ, found established.

From what has been said, the nature of the synagogical worship may be gathered. The synagogue was not properly one of the Mosaic institutions, and could lay no claim to a divine origin, save in so far as all the changes which took place in the condition of the Jewish people are referable to a special providence. With the temple, or the Levitical worship, it had no immediate connexion. The services were not sacrificial and typical, but verbal and homiletic: a priest, as such, had in the synagogue no function to discharge. He was not

[m] *τόπον οὔκ ἐστι ῥαδίως εὑρεῖν τῆς οἰκουμένης ὃς οὐ παραδέδεκται τοῦτο τὸ φῦλον, μήδ' ἐπεκρατεῖται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.* Strabo, quoted by Vitringa, i. p. 2. c. 12.

[n] Acts ii. 5.

indeed incapable of officiating, but no preference was shewn him, save that he was ordinarily called upon to pronounce the solemn benediction with which the assembly was dismissed; a duty, however, which, in the absence of a priest, could be performed by one of the ordinary officers[o]. With respect to those who might teach and expound, a considerable degree of liberty prevailed. While this office properly belonged to the rulers of the synagogue, and could not be exercised without their permission, it was commonly delegated by them to any properly qualified member of the assembly who might intimate his wish to discharge it[p]. Hence it excited no surprise when our Lord in the synagogue of Nazareth "stood up for to read[q];" the book was delivered to him, in his character of Rabbi, or Teacher, as a matter of course; and we read that thus, without hindrance, "He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee[r]." So it was with the Apostles. When Paul and Barnabas entered the synagogue in Pisidia, and took their seats upon the doctors' bench, the rulers sent to them, who were in all probability perfect strangers, a permissive message, "if they had any word of exhortation for the people," to "say on[s]."

The form of government which prevailed in the

[o] The שליח צבור or Legatus Ecclesiæ. See Vitringa, l. iii. p. 2. c. 20.

[p] Vitringa, l. iii. p. 1. c. 7.

[q] Luke iv. 16.

[r] Mark i. 39.

[s] Acts xiii. 14, 15.

synagogue was not every where the same. In the more populous cities it was framed on the presbyterian model; a college, or senate of persons, skilled in the law, being invested with the chief authority; while in the smaller villages, where there were not learned men in sufficient number to form such a senate, the synagogue was placed under the presidency of a single doctor of the law, who bore the title of Master (רב), or Teacher. Hence may be reconciled the varying statements of the New Testament, which sometimes speaks of the "rulers," and sometimes of the "ruler," of the synagogue; in the one case a corporate governing body being, apparently, meant, in the other an individual holding the same office[t]. The proper Jewish appellation of the members of the presiding council was "elders," (זְקֵנִים), and the duties appertaining to their office were to teach and to rule; the latter comprehending the regulation of all matters connected with public worship, the care of the poor, and the administration of discipline. Besides its governing college of elders, the synagogue had its inferior ministers, upon whom devolved the care of the sacred books, and other subordinate offices: of this order was the "minister," to whom our Lord, on the occasion already referred

[t] There is however but one passage (Luke xiii. 14.) in which a single Ἀρχισυνάγωγος is mentioned. The ordinary form of government was that of a Presbytery.

to, returned the book of Isaiah, from which He had been reading, to be deposited in its place[u].

The synagogues were used, not only as places of worship, but as courts of judicature for smaller offences; and frequent references occur in the New Testament to the punishments of scourging, and of excommunication[x], which it was within their province to inflict. Finally, in the synagogues it was usual for the principal doctors of the Jewish law to give instruction: seated on an elevated chair or platform, they were surrounded by their disciples who stood beneath; to which circumstance St. Paul alludes, when, in his address to the Jews, he declares that he was "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel[y]."

Such is a brief sketch of the origin and constitution of the Jewish synagogue; an institution which, under Divine Providence, had, in the lapse of ages, gradually established itself wherever there were Jews, that is, every where, and the design of which evidently was, that it should form the groundwork of the polity of the Christian Church. And perhaps there is no circumstance in the history of the Jewish people more strongly indicative of a superintending Providence, more clearly intended to prepare the way for the Gospel, than the one before us. Christianity, instead of being, like Judaism, confined to a particular locality, was to

[u] Luke iv. 20.

[x] Matt. x. 17. Luke xii. 11. Acts xxii. 19. John xi. 22. and 34.

[y] Acts xxii. 3.

embrace all men within its pale; but if the Jews had not, in their dispersed state after the captivity, formed themselves into synagogues, there could not have existed any religious centres to which the promulgation of the Gospel could have attached itself, as the Apostles, in the exercise of their mission, traversed the world. For the temple, and the temple services, were, as we know, incapable of multiplication: they were, by Divine appointment, fixed to one spot, and no Jew, rightly instructed in the principles of his religion, ever could, or did, think of erecting in a foreign land a counterpart of the sacred structure[z]. But in the synagogue exactly what was wanting was supplied. These places of worship could be multiplied indefinitely, without affecting the unity of the temple, or the connexion of the worshippers therewith: by them the knowledge of the Law and of the Prophets was maintained amidst the corrupting influences of heathenism; by them the Jewish mind became habituated to the offerings of prayer

[z] When Onias, driven from Judæa and disappointed in his hope of succeeding to the high priesthood, persuaded Ptolemy (B. C. 180—145.) to permit the erection of a temple at Leontopolis in Egypt, "his greatest difficulty was to reconcile the Jews to this new invention; their constant notion having hitherto been, that Jerusalem was the only place which God had chosen for His worship; and that it was sin to sacrifice to Him upon any altar elsewhere." Prideaux; Connect. p. ii. b. 4. Even Josephus calls this project of Onias *ἁμαρτίαν καὶ τοῦ νόμου παράβασιν.* Antiq. Jud. l. xiii. c. 3.

and praise instead of the bloody sacrifices of the Law, and to the ministry of the Word instead of a ministry of types. Thus, on their arrival at any new scene of labour, the missionaries of Christ, themselves Jews, had but to repair to the synagogue, and, as far as regards external facilities, they found every thing prepared for a successful promulgation of the Gospel. The transitional character of this institution, standing as it does between the Law and the Gospel, is deserving of most careful study: perhaps no subject among those connected with the ancient economy is more instructive, except it be the ceremonial Law itself.

That the polity of the Church, in its earlier stages at least, was modelled after that of the synagogue, admits of no reasonable doubt. We may argue the point indirectly, and directly. Indirectly; or from the extreme improbability that the Apostles could have adopted the temple as their pattern. Why this improbability exists has already been pointed out. The first Christian society came into existence in Jerusalem: now it could never have occurred to Jews, as long as the temple stood, and especially in the very locality which it occupied, to establish a religious society after its pattern, unless indeed they had received from their divine Master an express command to that effect. But so far is this from having been the case, that Christ Himself contemplated His Church, prospectively, as assuming the synagogical form,

both when He promised that where two or three should be gathered together in His name, He would be in the midst, and still more distinctly when He gave authority to every society of His followers to bind and loose [a], and to inflict the penalty of excommunication in case of disobedience [b]; functions which belonged, not to the temple, but to the synagogue.

It is of great importance to the due understanding of early Church history to bear in mind, that the visible separation of Christianity from Judaism was effected not at once, but gradually. The Apostles and their followers were at first regarded simply as a new Jewish sect, to be classed with those which sprang up in great numbers in the latter period of the Hebrew commonwealth; as such they evidently appear in the address of Gamaliel to the chief priests [c]. These sects had their peculiar opinions and practices; but they never considered themselves, nor were they considered by their Jewish brethren, as separatists from the Theocracy. Such evidently was the feeling of the Apostles, until the destruction of the temple unequivocally announced the close of the first dispensation. They frequented the temple at the appointed hours of

[a] Matt. xvi. 19. [b] Matt. xviii. 17.

[c] Acts v. 34. The title which the Christians bore was, "the sect of the Nazarenes." Acts xxiv. 5.

prayer[d]; and even the great Apostle of the uncircumcision, who so zealously vindicated the liberty of the Gentile converts from the yoke of the Law, thought it not inconsistent with his opinions to comply, as a matter of expediency, with the legal ordinances[e]. It was the testimony of St. James, when advising his brother Apostle to prove his attachment to the Law, by associating himself with certain persons about to undergo the purifications connected with a vow, that the believing Jews at Jerusalem were "all zealous of the Law[f];" and he mentions the fact without any mark of disapprobation. So far were the Apostles from assuming a hostile, or separatist, attitude in reference to the divinely-appointed Jewish ordinances as long as they existed: they waited for the course of events to make it clear that the old dispensation, having "waxed old," was about "to vanish away[g]." But to have established in the Christian Church a transcript of the temple and its sacrificial services, and that in close proximity to the original building, would have placed them in direct opposition to the existing economy; and, as far as human hindrances could do so, would have seriously impeded the progress of the Gospel. We should expect then that since the Apostles could not, of their own proper motion, have adopted this form of

[d] Acts iii. 1.

[e] Acts xxi. 26. See also xviii. 18; xx. 26.

[f] Acts xxi. 20.

[g] Heb. viii. 13.

polity, and since that of the synagogue was the only other one with which they were acquainted, the latter would be the model after which they would proceed in the visible organization of Christian societies.

But the point may be established directly and decisively from the actual correspondence between the polity of the Church and that of the Synagogue. The two inferior orders of the Christian ministry were derived from the latter institution. The first enlargement of the simple arrangement by which the Apostles themselves were the sole governors and teachers of the infant Church took place in the institution of the diaconate; an office which both in name and in function bore the closest resemblance to a well-known one in the Synagogue[h]. Whether the so-called seven deacons, whose appointment is mentioned in Acts vi., discharged the same functions as the ministers known by that name in later times, is immaterial[i]; it is certain that the deacons of St. Paul's Epistles, and of church history, occupied essentially the same position which the inferior ministers of the synagogue did. The next grade of the ministry, that

[h] The Chazzan, or ὑπηρέτης. See p. 14. Vitringa, l. iii. p. 2. c. 4.

[i] Vitringa (l. iii. p. 2. c. 5.) argues, that the office with which Stephen and his companions were invested, was different from the diaconate of later times; but it should seem on insufficient grounds. See Neander, "History of the Planting, &c." i. p. 46.

of presbyters, was still more clearly borrowed from the Jewish prototype. The appellation is here a literal translation of the Hebrew word for the elders of the synagogue; and the functions were identical. As the elders of the synagogue were its governing body, and sometimes its teachers, so the presbyters of the Church appear in St. Paul's Epistles under this twofold aspect. I need not remind an audience like the present, that the words *episcopus* and *presbyter* denote, in the Apostolical Epistles, the same office[k]; the appropriation of the former term to the highest order of ministers belonging to a later period: let us then hear St. Paul describing the functions of this office: "A bishop" (or presbyter) "must be apt to teach[l]:" "A bishop must be blameless—holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers[m]:" "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doc-

[k] "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders (πρεσβυτέρους) of the church." "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (ἐπισκόπους)." Acts xx. 17. and 28. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest—ordain elders (πρεσβυτέρους) in every city." "For a bishop (ἐπίσκοπος) must be blameless, &c." Tit. i. 5. and 7. "Paul and Timotheus—to all the saints—with the bishops (ἐπισκόποις=πρεσβυτέροις) and deacons." Phil. i. 1.

[l] 1 Tim. iii. 2. [m] Tit. i. 9.

trine[n]." It is obvious that here we have, with the necessary modifications, the elder of the synagogue; the office reappears, the same in all essential points, in the Church. But not a passage can be adduced in which the sacerdotal term proper to the temple, that of Ἱερεὺς, or Priest, is applied to any order of Christian ministers. Nor is the priestly function of sacrifice ever found enumerated among those proper to the ministry of the Gospel.

It must be admitted, that, as regards the third order of the ministry, of which in the persons of Timothy and Titus we see the rudiment,—the episcopate properly so called,—the analogy of the synagogue fails us[o]. For it does not appear that that institution possessed any office exactly corresponding in idea to that of the Christian bishop. The jurisdiction of the ruler, or rulers, of the synagogue, according as it was under the presidency of an individual or a presbytery, extended not beyond that particular society; while the episcopate, according to the ancient idea of it, formed a centre of unity to several Churches: the former were merely congregational officers, the episcopal office possessed an œcumenical character. It would be easy to shew that this, the latest addition to the polity of the Church which can be shewn to be of Apostolical origin, had no connexion with the temple any more than its predecessors, but it

[n] 1 Tim. v. 17.

[o] Vitringa, l. ii. c. 10.

is not necessary: we may be quite sure that the Apostles, having laid the foundations on the synagogue, would not borrow from the temple to complete the superstructure: a heterogeneous compound of this kind would have been not less foreign to their thoughts than a complete transfer of the temple ritual in all its integrity.

Various additional proofs might be adduced in support of the point before us, to which I can only briefly allude. The exercise of discipline,—a note of the Church nearly if not quite as essential as the pure preaching of the Word, and the right administration of the Sacraments,—with its final penalty of excommunication, passed from the synagogue to the Church; for no such custom belonged to the temple. So did the rite of imposition of hands which the Apostles practised in setting apart ministers to their office: by this ceremony the doctors of the synagogue were accustomed to invest such of their scholars, as had given proofs of adequate proficiency, with authority to teach in public. We have seen that the synagogue exercised, to a certain extent, judicial functions; to which power our Lord alludes, in His prospective reference to the organization of Christian societies; "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church," that is, to the particular congregation with which the injured party should be connected; "but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen

man and a publican[p]." St. Paul blames the Corinthians for not referring their disputes to arbitrators chosen from the Church, instead of going to law before the heathen magistrate; "Is there not a wise man among you," he says; "no not one that shall judge between his brethren[q]?" But it is needless to insist further on so plain a point: nothing may be considered as more certainly established than that the synagogical platform of polity was that which furnished a pattern to the Christian Church.

But if this be so, some very important inferences follow which open up leading points of contrast between the Law and the Gospel, as in the preceding discourses it is principally their essential agreement to which I have been directing your attention.

1. In the first place, we see now how impossible it was that Apostolic Christianity could have embodied the ideas of a human priesthood, and visible sacrifice. On this subject we are embarrassed rather by the abundance than by the scantiness of the evidence, which refutes the dogma of Rome. The repeated declarations of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the sacrifice of Christ is never to be repeated[r]; the absence of any allusion to sacrificial functions in the pastoral Epistles of St. Paul, addressed especially

[p] Matt. xviii. 17.
[q] 1 Cor. vi. 5.
[r] Heb. ix. 24—28; x. 10—14.

to Christian ministers; the marked abstinence of the Apostles, when speaking of the Christian ministry, from the use of terms proper to the Law; and the general character of the Christian dispensation, which being the completion of the types necessarily put an end to them; all prove, beyond doubt, that the dogma in question is no part of the Apostolic deposit of faith. But if any thing were wanting to complete the argument, or rather to account for the circumstances just mentioned, it is the derivation of the visible Church from the synagogue. Familiar as the Apostles were with sacrificial ideas and terms, they never associated them with the synagogue; and that is the reason why they never associate them with the Christian ministry. Just as little as the elders, or inferior ministers, of the Jewish institution were necessarily priests, so little are Christian presbyters and deacons; just as little as the exposition of the Law, or prayer and thanksgiving, were sacrifices, so little of a sacrificial element belongs to the worship of the Christian synagogue, as St. James expressly calls the assemblies of Christians[s]. Now it is incomprehensible, if a human priesthood was to exist under the Gospel, that the Apostles should have been guided to adopt a platform of polity which directly excludes it; and still more that they should in no instance have corrected the mistake into

[s] ἐὰν γὰρ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ὑμῶν ἀνὴρ χρυσοδακτύλιος. James ii. 2.

which it might be expected that the Church of subsequent ages would be thereby led. It was incumbent, I say, on the Apostles, on this hypothesis, to have explained to the first disciples, that notwithstanding the synagogical form which Christian societies had assumed, their breaking of bread was an "unbloody sacrifice," and their elders and deacons sacrificing priests; otherwise these disciples must have drawn the opposite conclusion. But they did not counteract the impression, because it was a just one; that, in fact, which was intended to be conveyed.

The Apostles do indeed transfer the terms of the Jewish Law to the Gospel, but it is in such a way as to exhibit, most plainly, the modification of meaning which we are to attach to them. The Jewish temple, as every reader of the New Testament knows, has in Christianity no material counterpart: the temple was the type first of the human nature of Christ, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily[t]; and then of those united to Him by His Spirit, Christians, individually and collectively[u]. These, His Church, His mystical body, now constitute the temple of God; and not a local centre. In like manner, it is true that the Gospel has priests, but it is the Church, the body of Christ, to which this term is applied, and not to a particular order. St. Peter declares all Christians to

[t] "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John ii. 19.

[u] 1 Cor. vi. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 4—9. Ephes. ii. 20—22.

be "a royal priesthood[v]," and regards the congregation, not the pastors alone, as the Lord's portion, or clergy[x]. We offer sacrifices too; but they are the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving[y], or the "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God," of ourselves to serve Him[z]. A very interesting analogy, bearing on the point before us, exists between the relation which the synagogue bore to the temple, and that in which local Christian Churches stand to the one true, or, as Protestants call it, the invisible, Church. However much synagogues might be multiplied, there was but one temple, one altar, one priesthood; and the synagogues, otherwise distinct societies, were connected together by their common relation to the temple. Just so, visible Churches, otherwise distinct societies, are one, not merely from their professing the same faith and administering the same sacraments, but from their common connexion with the mystical body of Christ, of which they are the visible manifestation, though from the inevitable admixture of foreign elements, an imperfect and inadequate one. For it is not local Churches as such that are called the temple of God, the spiritual building in which God dwells by His Spirit, but the one true Church, the bride of Christ, the heavenly Zion, which, though consisting of visible members, is at present

[v] 1 Peter ii. 5.

[x] *μηδ' ὡς κατακυριεύοντες τῶν κλήρων.* 1 Peter v. 3.

[y] Heb. xiii. 15.

[z] Rom. xii. 2.

invisible in its corporate capacity, as its Head Christ is invisible, and must remain so until the day of the "manifestation of the sons of God;" when, the Saviour appearing, His Church shall also appear with Him, purged from every taint of evil, whether the sin that remains even in the regenerate, or the tares, the Christians but in name, from which, in its present form of local Churches, no human discipline can perfectly free it. Hence the sacerdotal elements of Judaism, its temple services, have passed into Christianity, not literally but figuratively, or rather in the spiritual reality: whatever there is in the Christian Church of a sacerdotal character, is of the same nature with the Christian temple itself, that is, it is spiritual and invisible: while the synagogue, an institution which possessed nothing of a sacerdotal character, reappears literally and visibly in the form of local Christian societies, in which societies therefore neither priest nor sacrifice, in the proper sense of the words, can appear. Let me add, that it is not Romanists only who, on this point, misapprehend the nature of the new dispensation. Surely those of our premillenarian brethren, who interpret the concluding chapters of the prophet Ezekiel to signify a literal restoration of the temple-worship and sacrifices at Jerusalem, when the Jews, being converted, shall, as they suppose, be restored to their native land, have not sufficiently considered how by the one

offering of Christ, visible sacrifices have been for ever superseded.

2. Secondly, the connexion of the Synagogue with the Church throws light on the true idea of the Christian ministry, in its origin and perpetuation. On this point there are but two theories conceivable. We may suppose either that the sacred office is constituted from without, and descends in a certain line irrespectively of intellectual or spiritual qualifications; or that it springs up from within, and descends, it may be in an ascertainable line of succession, but not without a regard to the *fitness* of the administrator. The former is the mode of operation peculiar to the Law, the latter is that which belongs to the Gospel. The Levitical priesthood was imposed *ab extra* on the ancient Church; that is, a certain family was arbitrarily selected to discharge the office; and the priesthood descended from father to son by natural birth, liable, no doubt, to forfeiture for gross misconduct, as in the case of Eli, but otherwise independent of personal moral qualifications. This was quite in harmony with a system like that of Moses, typical in its structure, and operating upon the subject from without inwards. And as the principle of Romanism in general is the transmutation of the Gospel into the Law, so in this particular its doctrinal theory approximates most closely to that of the legal economy. There is the same idea of a purely external succession with

its inherited powers, for the want of which no fulness of natural or spiritual endowment can compensate[a]; only instead of priests by natural, we have priests by spiritual, descent; the existing body of bishops possessing the power, in and by the sacrament of orders, of spiritually generating pastors for the Church; language for which Rome, it is to be regretted, finds a precedent in too many of the fathers. If we ask, what is the power, or influence, transmitted, we receive for reply that it is the grace of the sacrament of orders; that is, not increase of sanctifying grace, not grace to use natural or acquired endowments aright; but the mystical grace of priesthood for the valid performance of holy functions, which is quite separable from saving faith in Christ. Finally, as the priests of the Law were always priests, no one having it in his power to reverse his natural birth, so to confer the same permanency of function on the priests of the new law, the doctrine of the "impressed character," or spiritual stamp, was invented, which, conferred at ordination, for ever distinguishes him who receives it from his brethren in Christ[b].

[a] Fateri oportet in eâ (Ecclesia) novum esse visibile et externum sacerdotium, in quod vetus translatum est. Hoc autem ab eodem Domino Salvatore nostro institutum esse, atque Apostolis, eorumque successoribus in sacerdotio, potestatem traditam consecrandi, offerendi, et ministrandi, corpus et sanguinem ejus—sacræ literæ ostendunt. Conc. Trid. Sess. 23. c. 1.

[b] Episcopus (in Sacramento ordinis) inquit, Accipe potes-

Such is the theory of Rome, but such is not the teaching of the New Testament on this subject. The latter may be briefly summed up thus: The Christian ministry is primarily a gift, secondarily an office. Its true idea is best understood by recurring to the first age of the Church. It is one of the great distinctions, and privileges, of our dispensation, that it enjoys an outpouring of the Spirit never before vouchsafed; it is emphatically the dispensation of the Spirit. This was made manifest to the first believers by an extraordinary profusion of spiritual gifts, all manifestations of the same Spirit, and all intended for edification. "To one," says St. Paul, "is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;" and to others, in like manner, "the working of miracles," "prophecy," "the discerning of spirits," "divers kinds of tongues," "the interpretation of tongues;" "the Spirit" dividing "to every man severally as He will[c]." And again: "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing,

tatem offerendi sacrificium, &c. quibus verbis semper docuit Ecclesia, dum materia exhibetur, potestatem consecrandæ Eucharistiæ, charactere animo impresso, tradi, cui gratiâ adjuncta sit ad illud munus rite et legitime obeundum. Cat. Conc. Trid. p. ii. c. 7. §. 22. Si quis dixerit . . . . eum qui sacerdos semel fuit laicum rursus fieri posse, anathema sit. Conc. Trid. Sess. 23. Can. 4.

[c] 1 Cor xii 4—12.

helps, governments, diversities of tongues [d]." Among these gifts, as will be seen, are those connected with the various functions of the ministry, such as "prophets," "teachers," "helps," and "governments." Still more pointedly, in the corresponding passage in Ephesians iv. is the ministry referred to the direct agency of the Holy Spirit: "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ[e]." Much error has arisen from supposing that St. Paul here enumerates different orders of the ministry: but other *orders* than those of apostles, presbyters, and deacons, Scripture does not present us with; and what the Apostle is speaking of is, with one exception, not offices but gifts[f]; as appears from the fact, that several of these

[d] 1 Cor. xii. 28. [e] Ephes. iv. 11, 12.

[f] "To make us understand that we must not confound the functions in the Church with the gifts of the Spirit, much less mistake the one for the other, let us number the gifts of the Spirit that are noted in this one chapter," (1 Cor. xii. 28.) "and see whether the public functions of the Church can any way be proportioned to them. Here are nine gifts of the Holy Ghost numbered. . . . . I trust there were not so many distinct offices in the Church." "He," (St. Paul,) "speaketh indeed" (Rom. xii. 6.) "of divers gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, for so *χαρίσματα διάφορα* doth import; of divers offices he speaketh not." Bilson, Perpet. Government, c. x. pp. 193 and 198. "I beseech them therefore which have hitherto troubled the Church with questions about degrees and offices of ecclesiastical calling, because they principally ground

functions might be united in one person. Thus an apostle might be an "evangelist," and a "teacher;" a "prophet" might be a "pastor," and a pastor a prophet; and both might be "helpers" or "governors." Whence we learn, that the ministry, as it comes directly from Christ, is a gift rather than an office, and that it is the Holy Ghost who, in the last resort, gives overseers to the Church. What may be called the natural ministry, by which expression is meant persons gifted by Christ, but not yet commissioned by the Church, exists before the formal: the gift precedes the office: the office is conferred on those supposed to possess the inward qualification; and the qualification comes from the Spirit, who refuses to be tied in His operations, and divides to every man as He will.

Is every one then who conceives that he has a ministerial gift, at liberty, without authority

themselves upon two places," (1 Cor. xii. 28. and Ephes. iv. 11.) "that, all partiality being laid aside, they would sincerely weigh and examine whether they have not misinterpreted both places, and all by surmising incompatible effects, when nothing is meant but sundry graces, gifts, and abilities, which Christ bestowed." Hooker, E. P. l. v. c. 78. The exception alluded to in the text is the Apostolate, which, we know, was an office; but it is possible that St. Paul here considers the office rather in reference to the grace peculiar to it, the various gifts it comprised, than in its outward aspect as a distinct order. Be this as it may, the other designations are clearly not of offices, but of spiritual gifts.

committed to him, to exercise it? No; for if the ministry is primarily a gift, it is secondarily an office. Here commences the function of the Church. Christ bestows the gift; but it belongs to the Church to examine into the validity of the claim, to authenticate it, and by prayer and imposition of hands to give the external commission. As in the Synagogue acquired endowments were necessary for the discharge of its offices, and yet these could not be exercised without the permission of the governing elders; so in the Church the spiritual gift finds its way into official exercise only through the existing formal ministry, to which, according to scriptural precedent, is committed the office of perpetuating itself. And thus a visible succession, and even an unbroken one, becomes possible, and in point of fact proceeds from age to age, unless violently interrupted; but not a succession in the Romish sense. The existing body of ministers cannot, and do not, transmit what is divine in the ministry, viz. the gift[g]; to confer this is the prerogative of the great Head of the Church: but they transmit that which is human in it, viz. the

[g] The Apostles indeed possessed a power of conferring the gifts of the Holy Spirit by the imposition of their hands; but this prerogative seems to have been confined to its first possessors: St. Paul could thus impart a gift to Timothy, (2 Tim. i. 6.) but we do not read that Timothy could do the same to his successors. Moreover, the Apostles conferred these gifts indiscriminately upon all believers; not upon the ministers of the Church only.

commission, the public recognition of the spiritual endowment previously existing. To enable the Apostles, and their fellow-labourers, to place in office those whom Christ had given to be pastors and teachers, a special spiritual gift, the "discerning of spirits," manifested itself in the Apostolic Church, by the exercise of which unworthy claimants were detected and rejected: meanwhile the door ever lay open for the natural ministry to pass into the formal; and even before it became formal, it was not to be violently suppressed: "Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings[h]." As in the Synagogue considerable liberty, in reference to the office of teaching, prevailed, so it seems to have been in the assemblies of the Apostolic Church. In 1 Cor. xiv. we have a lively picture of what took place on such occasions. The Corinthian Church had, of course, its regular pastors and governors, but every gift which proved itself to be from above was permitted to minister to edification; with the one provision, that "all things should be done decently and in order[i]," and the one limitation, that "women should keep silence in the churches[j]." These rules being observed, speaking with tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and prophesying, might all have their place. The prophets were to "speak two or three;" while the hearers were to "judge" whether what was delivered were agreeable to the doctrine of Christ.

[h] 1 Thess. v. 19, 20. [i] 1 Cor. xiv. 40. [j] Ibid. 34.

If, while one was speaking, a "revelation" was communicated to another, the first was to "hold his peace:" for "all" might "prophesy one by one," that "all" might "learn, and all be comforted[k]." It is obvious that the possessors of these gifts could not all have belonged to the positive ministry, yet the free exercise of them was in no way impeded. How many schisms might the Church of England have been spared, and they not of narrow sectarians but of men whom she could ill afford to lose, men of burning zeal, of true catholic largeness of heart, and eminently endowed with gifts to edify their brethren, had she, throughout her history, borne in mind these Apostolic principles: had she remembered, that the ministry is natural before it is formal, and that there is, and must always be, a natural ministry, which, from various circumstances, may never become official; and instead of stifling the manifestations of the Spirit within her pale, found a sphere for them to operate in safely!

It will not, I suppose, be urged, in extenuation of these remarks, that the age of miraculous gifts having long since ceased, we cannot reason from such a state of the Church to any subsequent one. It is true that we no longer expect extraordinary endowments, such as we find in the primitive Church; they were bestowed for a temporary purpose, and ceased when the Church no longer needed them to sustain her own faith, or to make

[k] 1 Cor. xiv. 29—31.

an impression on the torpid mind of heathenism. In St. Paul's pastoral epistles we plainly see the process of transition from the period of miraculous gifts to the normal state into which the Church was to settle. The gift of the discernment of spirits begins to give place to careful examination of candidates for the sacred office by those to whom it appertains to ordain; training and experience to supply the place of "helps" and "governments." Natural aptitude, moral qualifications, the habitual graces of "power, and love, and of a sound mind," are what St. Paul directs Timothy to require in presbyters and deacons. But though the particular circumstances of the Church may change, the principles of the new economy surely remain the same in every age; and these principles, on the point before us, are, that the ministry is not given from without[1], but springs up from within the Church, and is, in fact, inherent in its spiritual constitution; that, before it is any thing else, it is a gift, or power, emanating directly

[1] It may be urged that, at any rate, the Apostolate was instituted before the Church came into existence, and stood related to it as an external authority. This is true, and shews clearly that the Apostles, as such, were to have no successors. It was their province and commission to found the Church, and therefore they could not well have formed part of its permanent natural ministry. Their task completed, they were removed; but they still, in their writings, act as the supreme authority to which Christians must appeal and submit.

from Christ, and not subject to any law of transmission; and that the external commission, though necessary, is but the public authentication of the inward call by those who have "authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard[m]." Hence the positive ministry is never actually identical with the true; it partakes of the imperfection which belongs to the Church itself in its visible aspect. Since infallibility is not promised to the elders or bishops, in the work of "trying the spirits," or pronouncing upon the fitness of those who seek admission to the sacred office, mistakes will occur; and just as many in the visible Church are not living members of Christ, so some whom Christ has not called will be found in the outward ministry, and their ministrations may be efficacious, though they themselves, awful thought! be cast-aways. Admirably, as is her wont, has our Church combined the twofold qualification in her formularies; placing at the threshold of the entrance into the ministry the solemn question, "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and ministration[n]?" while in her Articles she pronounces, "that it is

[m] Art. XXIII. "Out of them thus endued with the gifts of the Spirit upon their conversion to the Christian faith the Church had her ministers chosen, unto whom was given ecclesiastical power" (i. e. the external commission) "by ordination." Hooker, E. P. b. v. c. 78. s. 9.

[n] The Ordering of Deacons.

not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he is lawfully called, and sent to execute the same[o]."

It is needless to add, that a mystical grace of priesthood, by which holy functions are rendered valid, passing from and to unconscious agents, is an idea unknown to the New Testament Scriptures. It is a transfer, and a misapplied one, of the principles of the Law to the Gospel; it betrays a misapprehension of the ministry proper to a spiritual dispensation like ours; and it is connected, as we well know, with other serious errors, which need not now be specified. In Romanism it has its place, it is an essential part of the system: in a Protestant Church, like ours, it is an abnormal inconsistency, which finds no connecting point, no nutriment, in the system that surrounds it. And would that pious men, actuated by the best motives, were more cautious in employing weapons against dissent, the temper of which, in the hour of trial, will be found to be very different from that of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God!

3. Once more, we learn from the derivation of the visible Church from the Synagogue the true conception of Christian worship. The services of the Synagogue were verbal and homiletic, not typical or symbolical; and such in the main are

[o] Art. XXIII.

those of every Christian assembly which would conform to the Apostolic model. Christian worship, in its essence, or before it becomes external, consists in faith, hope, and love, the affections of the sanctified heart: to these correspond the outward vehicles of expression, the word of God, prayer, and the sacraments, the three main elements of the services of the Christian temple. Now it is true that one of these, the sacraments, is partially symbolical in character; but even this not wholly so, for the word and faith must be combined with the outward act to complete the sacrament[p]; while the other two are confessedly purely verbal. Here then we have a leading point of distinction between the Law and the Gospel: in the worship of the former the predominant feature was symbolism, or teaching by action; in that of the latter the verbal element is predominant, a more spiritual instrument befitting the more spiritual dispensation.

Recurring for a moment to the passages already alluded to, in which ministerial gifts are mentioned, we find that, without an exception, they are all connected with the ministry of the word. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, tongues, all come under the same category, that of the ministration of the word; while of a ceremonial

[p] Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit Sacramentum, etiam ipsum tanquam visibile verbum. Aug. in Joann. Evang. Tract. 80.

law, the proper instrument of a symbolical mode of worship, the New Testament presents no trace. If the Corinthian assembly is to be regarded, and we cannot doubt that it is so, as a specimen of what Christian worship, at least in its idea, is, the same conclusion will follow: the congregation, we know, came together "to eat the Lord's Supper[q]," but the governing function in it was the word of God, under one or another of the various forms which the spiritual gifts of the Apostolic age assumed. Whence we draw the inference, that a tendency towards the substitution of symbolical for verbal instruction is, so far, a retrograde movement from the perfection of the Gospel dispensation to the shadows of Judaism.

But to prevent a misunderstanding, a distinction is here necessary. The question then is not concerning the legitimate application of art to Christian purposes; which, provided it be not carried to excess, is allowable, and may, in some cases, prove edifying. Christianity repels not the aid of architecture, or of music, if they are so employed as to promote devotion, and not to substitute for it a mere excitement of animal feeling: it was a narrow-minded view that led the old puritans to object to the use of organs in churches. Even here indeed caution is needful, lest the simplicity of Christian worship be obscured by the adjuncts which profess to promote it: every one imbued

[q] 1 Cor. xi. 20.

with the spirit of Apostolic Christianity feels that the sensuous ritual of Rome is, apart from the other more serious errors which it involves, out of harmony with the general character of the Gospel. But pomp and ceremony of ritual are not necessarily symbolism, which latter rests upon a theory, and implies dogmatical tendencies of erroneous character. The ultimate principle on which symbolism in the Christian Church rests is, that the Church is the representative, or, as modern Romanists are fond of terming it, the continued incarnation, of Christ; the true meaning of which is, that Christ Himself is not present amongst His people, in His word and by His Spirit, but has retired from the administration of the spiritual kingdom, having first delegated His powers, priestly, prophetical, and regal, to the Church, that is, to the clergy. Wherever this dogma gains an entrance, we have drifted far away indeed from Apostolic doctrine. And symbolism is connected with it. The parts of a cathedral, the dresses of the officiating ministers, the holy furniture, represent Christ and the truths connected with His work; they are a substitute for an absent Saviour, just as the Jewish ritual was necessarily symbolical because Christ had not as yet come. But as God Himself abolished the ceremonial law when Christ appeared, so the return to such a system can never be rendered compatible with Apostolic Christianity. It brings us back to the dimness

and imperfection of the elder economy; it belongs to a lower stage of religious knowledge, than that which we are supposed to possess; it contemplates Christians as children, not as men, in spiritual understanding. And experience shews that it has not only given rise to an undue depreciation of the word of God, as the great instrument of edifying the Church, but is intimately associated with the sacrificial system of Rome, and its train of unscriptural doctrines and practices.

The subject we have been discussing is not without its practical bearing, especially in reference to those of us who are either actually engaged in the ministry, or look forward to undertaking the sacred office. Beware, my younger brethren, of permitting any object, whether it be the Church, or the Sacraments, or human mediators, to intervene between the Saviour and those whom He came to redeem: the effect will be an instantaneous chill of Christian feeling, which will make itself felt in your ministrations, and fatally check the progress of the work of God among your people. Recollect, that justification by faith only, one of the great scriptural truths recovered at the Reformation, implies, not merely the gratuitous nature of salvation, but the directness of the Christian's access to God in and through Christ; "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life[r]," and waits not for the intervention of the

[r] John iii. 36.

Church to confirm, or withhold, the blessing. Let it be your aim to present directly to the eye of faith a crucified and ascended Redeemer, present to bless and to sanctify, "a very present help in time of trouble," the great refuge and sanctuary of sinful man.

The temptation has always presented itself to the clergy to magnify their office in forbidden ways, and by unscriptural claims. Magnify it too much we cannot, but it must be on proper grounds. Ambassadors for Christ, we bear the message of reconciliation to a fallen world; we are intrusted with a ministry which angels might desire to discharge, with interests which are commensurate in importance with eternity; our trials are more severe than those of our brethren, our supports and consolations, if found faithful, proportionably great. What more do we need than such a discharge of these high functions as shall be answerable to their importance, to secure for our office the estimation that rightfully belongs to it? But if we rest our claims to the respect and attachment of our flocks upon the sacerdotal theory; as if the sacraments, from being administered by us, possessed a validity which would not otherwise belong to them, or as if we occupied a mediatorial position between man and God; we not only tread upon unscriptural ground, but run imminent risk of alienating from us those who constitute the pith and sinew of our Church. For nothing is more

certain than that the great body of our lay brethren are strongly, and not without reason, opposed to the recognition of any such sacerdotal claims.

Let us be cautious too, how we permit the revived taste for ecclesiastical architecture and decoration, characteristic of our times, to divert our minds from the infinitely more important object of adding spiritual stones to the Christian temple. A movement, praiseworthy in itself, may become, especially to refined and imaginative minds, a snare: the present one will become so, if the objects of it occupy other than a very subordinate place in our regards. A frivolous Christianity is the most vapid of all things; and what can be more frivolous than for the mind to be occupied by æsthetic considerations, as the modern phrase is, while souls are hungering for the bread of life? The Roman Emperor, indulging his musical tastes while the city was burning, is but a feeble image of such a misemployment of time and talents. Let us pray, my brethren, for a deeper sense of the value of souls, of the shortness of time, of the solemn vows we have taken upon us, of the solemn account we must give of our stewardship;—and then all thoughts will be swallowed up in the desire to become the instruments, under God, of turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and building up the stedfast in their most holy faith.

LECTURE VIII.

GALATIANS iii. 3.

Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

To the teacher of religion, as well as to the private Christian, it must ever be the most grateful occupation to contemplate divine truth as it proceeds directly from its Author, and is contained in His word, without turning aside to examine how it has been soiled and disfigured in passing through the hands of men. Gladly would he linger in the green pastures, ever fresh, and by the still waters, deep but pure, whither the good shepherd leads his flock; and leave the arid byepaths of error and controversy to be explored by others, whose taste or vocation may especially lead them thereto. But such a choice is impossible. Christianity, in its passage through the world, has been affected by so many adverse influences, that the history of the Church is little else but a history of religious error, and of the efforts made, from time to time, by the faithful servants

of Christ to counteract it: one doctrine after another has been assailed, and has been defended: a theological language has grown up, which, being the product of controversy, inevitably suggests the history of its formation: and thus it has become difficult to handle any topic of religion, without glancing at the erroneous views that, in the lapse of ages, have become associated with it, and have exercised a sway more or less lasting over the minds of men.

What we cannot avoid may be rendered instructive, if we approach such inquiries in a spirit of candour and charity towards those who differ from us, accompanied with a sincere desire to profit by the lessons of history, and a sense of the probability of ourselves labouring under prejudices which warp the mental vision, and need to be allowed for in the conclusions at which we arrive. The asperity of theologians has passed into a proverb; yet surely it cannot be an inherent quality of religious study that it should narrow the sympathies, and embitter the minds, of those who engage in it: we should rather expect, that the views it opens up of human infirmity in the brightest examples, of the force of early associations, of the extreme difficulty of preserving the balance of the judgment in the heat of controversy, and of the genuine piety which is compatible with many, and sometimes serious, differences of opinion, would predispose the mind to

forbearance, and to a charitable construction of what, at first sight, might seem of ambiguous import, or even dangerous to the integrity of the Christian faith. If, having completed the survey which it was proposed to take of the ancient economy, as introductory to the Gospel, I proceed, in this the concluding discourse, to draw your attention to some of the principal errors that have prevailed in the Church respecting the relation of the Law to the Gospel, it is because such a review may, under God's blessing, minister to edification, while we take warning from the mistakes into which our predecessors in the faith, men frequently of a piety and a usefulness superior to any to which we can make pretension, have fallen; and because I believe it is possible to argue theological points without acrimony, and even to throw ourselves, to a considerable extent, into the position and feelings of those from whom, on the whole, we are constrained to differ.

It was intimated, in the introductory discourse, that the early Church had to contend against two extreme views on the subject before us: that of the ancient heretics, who denied the divine origin of the Old Testament, and entirely dissociated it from the New; and that of the Judaizing Christians, who insisted on the continued obligation of the Law of Moses, and would have had Christians not only baptized but circumcised, and so rendered subject to all the legal ordinances. Many of these

ancient errors, at least in their former shape, have passed away, and it would be a fruitless task to resuscitate the dead for the purpose of slaying them again; but the division may still be adopted, according as tendencies are perceivable, on the one hand, to dissever the Gospel from the Law, and, on the other, to reconstruct the Gospel on the principles of the legal economy.

I. All Christian Churches seem to agree in holding that the civil, and ceremonial, laws of Moses are no longer binding on Christians; but very soon after the commencement of the Reformation, the Protestants found it necessary to incorporate in their confessions of faith a statement to the effect, that "no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral[a];" or, as it was more explicitly worded in the Articles of 1552, "they are not to be hearkened unto, who affirm that Holy Scripture is given only to the weak, and do boast themselves continually of the Spirit, of whom, say they, they have learned such things as they teach, although the same be most evidently repugnant to the word of God." It is probably under this form, that of Antinomianism, that any disposition will still be found existing unduly to sever the two dispensations; at least any that requires notice. For the depreciation of the Old Testament which meets us in modern rationalistic

[a] Art. vii.

writers, both at home and abroad, so manifestly springs from its explicit testimony to certain doctrines of the New which these writers dislike, that it can hardly be classed with the errors we are now considering; it is on the ruins of both dispensations, that reason, thus misapplied, would erect her temple. Moreover, these are the aberrations of a few speculative minds, which may dazzle for the moment, but are not likely to leave any permanent traces of their existence behind. The popular mind cares little for refinements in religion; and either strongly grasps Christianity in its broad, essential, features, in the points which come home to the business and bosoms of men, or abandons it altogether. But Antinomianism has preserved a lingering vitality, which shows its power of assimilation with the corrupt tendencies of the heart: it meets us in our manufacturing towns amongst that part of the neglected population which has not fallen away to infidelity or socialism; in the dregs of dissentient bodies, left behind after the separation of the purer part; in the mystic sects which spring up from time to time; and, if we search for it, we shall find it lurking in our own hearts.

Amidst the effervescence of feeling produced by the preaching of Luther and his contemporaries, it is not to be wondered at that many impure elements were thrown up to the surface. By the promulgation of a recovered Gospel the yoke of

bondage, which had pressed so heavily upon men's consciences, was broken: the reasserting of the great Scriptural truths of the indwelling of the Spirit, not in a particular order, but in the whole body of the faithful, and of the universal priesthood of Christians, shook the edifice of sacerdotal usurpation to its base, and vindicated to the Christian laity their inalienable rights. A reaction of sentiment so great would naturally give rise to occasional excesses on the other side; and in some instances the recovered liberty of the Church ran wild into license. Together with the authority of the Church that of the written word was repudiated; and the inner Christ of the heart, the supposed voice of the Spirit within, superseded the more authentic declaration of His will in the Scriptures. Inconvenient precepts were set aside under the plea of their being "the letter" that "killeth," while the "Spirit" that "giveth life" became any thing but a Spirit of love and purity. The natural good sense of Luther at once perceived the dangerous character of these tenets, which, besides their inherent mischief, brought discredit on the Protestant movement with which, in the minds of careless inquirers, they became associated; and with his usual earnestness he laboured to check their progress. But the spirit of enthusiasm, kindling as it proceeded, burst all bounds: it announced the doctrine, that Christians are free from obedience to the moral law; it next extended

this exemption to the case of the civil magistracy, which was denounced as inconsistent with spiritual freedom; passing into fanaticism, it began to contract a malignant character; and at length, impatient of the slow progress of their views, (men in general remaining unconvinced by the reasonings employed,) the leaders of the movement adopted the more speedy and decisive argument of the sword, and pleading that "the saints" were "to inherit the earth," at the head of their misguided followers, committed fearful excesses throughout Germany. They were at length dispersed, and put down, but not without considerable bloodshed.

Such was the origin, and such the opinions, of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, with whom the modern sect known by that name must by no means be confounded. The latter indeed, like the former, reject infant-baptism and episcopacy, but with this exception, they have little in common; Antipædobaptists therefore would seem to be their more appropriate title. The student must bear this in mind, when he feels surprised at the excessive severity of the laws enacted against the Anabaptists of former times both in this country and on the continent: the sect was as much a political as a religious one; or rather its professed religious tenets were incompatible with the existence of social order and security[b].

[b] For an account of the ancient Anabaptists, see Mosheim, Cent. 16. s. 3. p. 2. c. 3.

The suppression of the Anabaptist tumults by no means prevented the spread of their opinions. Calvin as well as Luther found it necessary to protest against the doctrines of a sect of libertines, who appeared in Flanders, and who, like their brethren in Germany, taught that Scripture is a dead letter; that the spiritual man is raised above both divine and human laws; and that those who had attained, by sublime contemplation, to union with the Deity, are at liberty to indulge their passions without restraint[c]. The Family of Love, originally from Holland, and other enthusiastic sects, followed in the same track. A vague spiritualism was mostly the characteristic of these bodies; but during the period of the civil wars in this country Antinomianism began to ally itself with the more rigid forms of Calvinism, and to assume the aspect of a logical theory. Since those who are elected to eternal life must, in consequence of an irreversible decree, be led to the practice of holiness, while the reprobate can by no possibility be moved to repent and reform their lives, it is needless for the ministers of Christ to press the moral duties of the first and second tables: some even propounded the revolting doctrine, that the sins of the elect are not properly sins, though they may appear so in the eyes of men; since God sees no sin in those who are in Christ; and that consequently watchfulness against

[c] Calvin. Tract. adversus Libert. Opera, tom. viii.

temptation, and repentance after falling, are to the Christian equally unnecessary.

The disservice to the cause of truth occasioned by these excesses was incalculable. A suspicion, not as yet, it is to be feared, wholly removed, came to attach universally to certain doctrines, clearly contained in Scripture, but liable, like every Scriptural truth, to be abused: spiritual influences, even those which we now happily speak of as the common property of Christians, were deemed a fitting subject of contemptuous sarcasm: in their laudable endeavours to counteract the exorbitancies of Antinomianism our preachers became moral essayists: and a torpor stole over the Church, which in its turn produced an outburst of religious feeling, not without its enthusiastic elements, and ending in a lamented schism. Such is the penalty we pay for failing to maintain in the body spiritual an equable glow of religious fervour. We permit the coldness of an apathetic spirit to creep over us; and then it is usually by a violent reaction, proceeding much further than is desirable, that equilibrium is restored.

It is difficult to say on what dogmatical grounds, if any, the fanatical sects of the Reformation erected their system; but their fundamental errors were obviously a severance of the spiritual life from the external, written, word, and an attempt to construct a perfectly pure visible Church upon earth.

[d] Mosheim, Cent. 17. s. 2. p. 2. c. 2.

The visionary mystic, weary of the solid nutriment furnished by Scripture, which, while it abundantly provides for our real spiritual wants, ministers little food to the imagination, begins to live in a world of his own: he dreams dreams, he hears voices, he sees visions; animal impulses are mistaken for the work of the Spirit; he becomes, in his own estimation, the favourite of heaven, a prophet, specially commissioned to testify against a corrupt Church, and a guilty world. Finding that the community to which by birth and baptism he belongs is not disposed to recognise his claims, he separates from it, gathers around him others of like mind, and engages in the enterprise of establishing a society perfectly defecated from impure admixtures. An uncommon severity of discipline usually marks the commencement of such attempts. And it were well if the delusion terminated here; but it commonly does not so. The mind, exhausted by feverish excitement, becomes in too many cases incapable of correct moral judgment, or of resisting temptation; and instances are on record of the mystic's having been precipitated from the heights of ecstatic devotion into gross sin. The community too, founded on these principles, soon begins to give evidence of the inevitably mixed character of every local Church: tares appear amongst the wheat; and either fresh schisms ensue, to be thus perpetually repeated, or discipline becomes en-

tirely relaxed, and with the pretension to superior purity the practice is abandoned.

With respect to doctrinal Antinomianism, it commonly appeals to a few passages in St. Paul's Epistles, in which Christians are said to be free from, or dead to, the law. "We are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter[e]." "The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient[f]." Now it cannot, I think, be argued that the Apostle is here speaking of the ceremonial law only; the whole tenor of his reasoning shews that, on the contrary, it is particularly the moral law to which he alludes: for in immediate connexion with the former of the passages just cited, he proceeds to speak of the power of the law to produce conviction of sin, drawing his illustration from the tenth Commandment; "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet[g]." But does it follow, as the Antinomian would have it, that the moral law is no longer binding on Christians? Far from it; this is to mistake St. Paul's meaning. We must interpret these statements of his so as to make them harmonize with his own on other occasions; as when he says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea we establish the law[h];" and with those of our

[e] Rom. vii. 6. [f] 1 Tim. iv. 9. [g] Rom. vii. 7. [h] Rom. iii. 31.

Lord respecting the perpetual obligation of the moral law; "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled[i]." Christians, then, are dead to the law, in the first place, as a means of justification. To suppose that by obedience to the law eternal life could be attained was the great error of the later Jews; an error for which they found no ground in the law itself, which no where promises eternal life as the reward of obedience. Let it be observed, once for all, that mankind never has, since the fall, been placed under a covenant of works in this sense. But misled by a fond notion of the perfection of their economy, and in a spirit of proud self-righteousness, the Jews first made the legal covenant one of eternal life, and then insisted that they had fulfilled the conditions. Against this error St. Paul protests; proving that all are under sin, that Abraham himself was not justified by works, and that by the vicarious atonement of Christ Christians are formally released from a covenant which, if it ever existed, could only have done so during the time of man's innocency. But the law has not lost its use, even under this aspect. For it is still necessary, in order, by its application to the conscience, to produce that conviction of sin which impels men to desire and accept the justification offered to them in the Gospel. Christians,

[i] Matt. v. 17—19.

secondly, so far forth as they are Christians, are dead to the law, in respect of its being an external code, confronting man but not yet written on the heart. Prophecy announces it as one of the characteristics of the new covenant, that the law of God should under it become thus the law of the inner man[k]; that is, that Christians should be impelled to holy obedience by the spontaneous promptings of a sanctified heart, and not merely directed by a literal rule. And that Christian has made but scanty progress in his religion who is not thus a law to himself. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" makes him "free from the law of sin and death[l];" "love is the fulfilling of the law[m]," but the very element in which the Christian lives is love to God, and to man for Christ's sake. Yet here even less than in the former case can we dispense with the written code. For it is only *so far forth as* he is a new creature in Christ that the Christian is a law to himself; and we know that in this life the victory over sin is never perfect. Hereafter, when the work of sanctification shall be complete, there will be no need of any external monitor to say, "This is the way, walk ye in it[n];" at present, with the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, the stern, but friendly, tones of the law are necessary, both to testify against the

[k] Jer. xxxi. 33. [l] Rom. viii. 2. [m] Rom. xiii. 10.
[n] Isaiah xxx. 21.

sin that still cleaves to the Christian, and to furnish an objective standard of duty which no sophistry of the corrupt heart shall be able to adulterate.

We hold then that the moral law is still binding on Christians, and this even in its concrete, Jewish, form. For the view which some writers of eminence have maintained,—that the law is indeed binding, but not because it is part of the Mosaic code, but because it expresses the eternal principles of morality; so that in its present form of the Decalogue it is to us abrogated no less than the ordinances of the Passover or of the year of Jubilee[o],—seems not altogether free from danger. Can we safely trust to the natural principles of morality as a guide? The Gentiles had such principles, yet we know what their standard ultimately became[p]. The spirit of a law, or a constitution, is apt to evaporate, unless enshrined in a form; the form is not the spirit, but it is a protection thereto. In the Prophets, and still more in the Sermon on the Mount, the full spiritual import of the Decalogue is unfolded: but just as both the Prophets and our Lord fall back on the original code as the foundation of the superstructure which they raise, so it is well that the teachers of religion now, while inculcating moral duties, can appeal to a divinely given com-

[o] Abp. Whately, Essay on Abolition of Law.

[p] Rom. i.

pendium, which cannot be hurtful, and may, on occasions, prove of use.

Permit me, before I quit this part of the discourse, to add a practical hint or two. First, then, my brethren, beware of charging Antinomianism on doctrines which you may not relish, and especially of misrepresenting them in order to bring the charge home. Thus, for example, if you are contending against the doctrine of imputed righteousness, which, though it seems to be the doctrine of our Church and of Scripture[q], may, to some extent, be regarded as an open question, at least do not invidiously describe it as meaning that each particular act of Christ's holy life is counted the believer's act, and in such a sense as to absolve the latter from the necessity of personal holiness: this is a caricature, not a fair statement, of the doctrine in question. In like manner, be cautious of insisting that there is a necessary connexion between what is called Calvinism, even the highest forms of it, and laxity

[q] "Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in Him. He for them paid their ransom by His death. He for them fulfilled the law in His life, so that now in Him, and by Him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law." Homily on Salvation, Part 1. "We are *accounted* righteous before God &c." Art. xi. "—that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." Rom. iv. 11. "Who of God is made unto us—righteousness." 1 Cor. i. 30. "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. v. 21.

of practice: for facts will not bear you out, and the Calvinist may reply that, so far from leading to such a result, his system is the only one that effectually provides for holiness of life; since this latter is no less a part of the decree than effectual calling or perseverance.

Secondly, in dealing with cases of avowed Antinomianism, as they arise in our parochial experience, let us take care how we permit the question to be transferred from the domain of Scripture and conscience to that of metaphysical theology. The disease, being one much more of the heart than of the head, is only inflamed by argument. Besides, the disputant will always find some loophole whereby to escape from logical consequences, however cogent. If any salutary impression is ever to be made, it must be by appeals of a practical character: we must hold such a religionist fast by "reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," and endeavour to rouse the dormant conscience to a sense of sin and danger.

II. But if occasionally tendencies may be perceived to abrogate the authority of the moral law, incomparably more powerful and more widely spread are those which exist towards the opposite error, viz. to reconstruct the Gospel on the principles of the legal economy. I am not now alluding to certain salient points, such as the introduction of a human priesthood into Christianity, on which sufficient has been already said;

but to the general aspect which the new dispensation has been, under the influence of this mode of thinking, made to assume.

Let the student open the decrees of the Council of Trent, and under the head of Justification, he will find the following Canon: "If any one shall say that Jesus Christ was given to man as a Redeemer to trust in, but not as a Legislator to obey, let him be anathema[r]." At first sight there appears nothing remarkable in this: the words seem simple enough, and are susceptible of a good meaning. We are bound to obey Christ; and if it might excite attention that the word Legislator, rather than King, is used, the difference might not seem important. But it is not so: the expression was used of set purpose: and in the view thus briefly indicated the errors of more than a thousand years are implicitly contained. We have here, in short, nothing less than the principle which has presided over the construction of false, or spurious, Catholicism, from nearly the Apostolic age to its crowning achievement in the Papacy. That principle is, the transmutation of the Gospel into a ceremonial law like that of Moses; or, more specifically, the investing of the whole of the visible system of the Church, as we find it, for example, in the fourth and the succeeding centuries, with the character of an

[r] Sess. vi. Can. xxi.

express divine appointment, and with a mediatorial efficacy between man and God.

It has been remarked, in a preceding discourse[s], that one of the most striking differences between the Old and the New Testament is the absence in the latter of any code regulating from without the religious life of the Christian as that of the Jew was regulated. Christ assuredly was no Lawgiver in the sense in which Moses was. Where are the constituent elements of the Christian law? Where the graduated hierarchy; where the ritual; where the liturgical formularies; where the specific directions how divine worship should be conducted? Not in the New Testament; which contents itself with general principles, with Apostolical precedents, and neither enacts laws on these subjects, nor fills up details to any considerable extent. Survey the Church on her birthday, the day of Pentecost: and what aspect does she present? A company of men filled with the Holy Ghost, are seen under the guidance and teaching of the Apostles: no visible organization has as yet even commenced. In the upper chamber where the first Christians are assembled, no liturgies guide the unpremeditated effusions of prayer and praise which ascend to God. The converts break bread from house to house with gladness and singleness of heart; but what ritual they used in celebrating the Lord's Supper we are not informed. Believers are baptized on pro-

[s] Lecture II. p. 42.

fession of repentance, and faith in the holy Trinity; but on the use of creeds, at that time, Scripture is silent. Let us now transport ourselves in imagination to the fifth century, and how different is the spectacle which we behold. We see an organized Episcopacy extending like a network over the whole of Christendom, each Bishop being at once the chief pastor of his own Church, and the instrument of union between it and all other Churches: this Episcopate is itself united and consolidated by the institution, first of metropolitans, then of patriarchs. The primitive upper chamber has given place to gorgeous structures; if we enter which there will meet our eye first, in the outer vestibule, the penitents and catechumens; then, in the nave, the faithful, to whom alone access was permitted to the Lord's table; and at the upper end, divided by the chancel rails from the rest of the congregation, the Bishop with his Presbyters. Formal liturgies lead the devotions of the people: and carefully worded creeds test the orthodoxy of candidates for baptism, and of suspected heretics. In what light are we to regard these additions to the simple polity and worship of the infant Christian Church? As divine appointments; or as corruptions, the offspring of superstition and priestcraft? Neither the one nor the other. If we cannot approve of all that belongs to the visible system of the Church of this age; if we cannot shut our eyes to the pal-

pable advances of superstition; the greater part, nevertheless, of these external developments must be regarded as simply the natural, necessary, and, to a considerable extent, salutary, efforts of Christianity to adapt herself to changing circumstances, and to manifest outwardly the unseen unity of the Spirit. Some of them, as Episcopacy, can be traced to the Apostles themselves; the rest are mostly post-apostolical: but all followed the same law, the law, as it may be called, of natural development.

Let us take the instance of Church-polity, and examine on what principles the Apostles proceeded in the formation of so much of the structure as can be ascribed to them. Did they traverse the world, carrying with them an iron model, which they set up at once, and in all its integrity, as a necessary constituent of Christianity, in every place where they founded a Church? Far from it. The work of visible organization proceeded gradually, and as need required: the want was always allowed to be felt before it was supplied. As long as the simpler arrangements sufficed, they were suffered to remain: it was only when difficulties arose, or the extension of Christianity rendered additional organization necessary, that the Apostles interfered to supply the defect. Sole governors at first of the Christian society, they soon discovered that secular occupations withdrew them too much from the ministry of the word and

prayer; hence the institution of Deacons to relieve them of this burden. As Churches multiplied, it became impossible for them to teach in each local society, or administer its affairs, in person; hence the next step, the appointment of Presbyters. Finally, when they were about to leave the world, they gave Episcopacy to the Church, as the best instrument of preserving unity, and repelling the incursions of heresy. And all this they did, not as if there could be no Church where a certain form of polity did not exist, but on common, tangible, grounds of order, and of necessity. After their death, the Church pursued the same course. The Bishops of a district evolved from themselves a metropolitan centre of unity; metropolitans a patriarchal. Synods, first diocesan, then provincial, then general, discussed the affairs of the Christian commonwealth, and issued regulations binding the whole. The Christian society followed the law of all societies which have their true being within: it developed itself from within outwards; not, like the Mosaic system, in the reverse direction. Instead of passively receiving a superinduced stamp from without, it threw itself out, by force of the Spirit within, into natural, organic, forms. The Bishop of Rome begins to acquire an undefined superiority, arising chiefly from the political importance of his episcopal seat: so early as the age of Cyprian, as every reader of his Epistles knows,

the idea of a central primacy for the Western Church had begun to present itself to men's minds. Once presented, it rapidly gathered strength, and ended in a recognised supremacy, with fixed rights and privileges. Let not Protestants be offended if we say, that thus far the Papacy is both a natural phenomenon, and one not necessarily antichristian. If it was not against the principles of the Gospel for a number of Bishops to gather round a metropolitan centre, no more does it seem to have been for the metropolitans of the Roman empire, as long as it held together, to create a centre of unity to themselves, and therefore to the whole of that branch of the Church. We recognise here a striking instance of the uniting, consolidating, power of Christianity, which loves to see visible representations of the hidden unity of the Spirit, and, where not sectarian, succeeds in producing them.

The same remarks apply to the other changes which the external aspect of the Church underwent. When a mixed multitude began to crowd into the sacred inclosure, it became necessary to make distinctions, to erect barriers; to sever inquirers from catechumens, catechumens from baptized Christians, the lapsed from the stedfast: and especially to guard the Eucharist from profanation. For the same reason, it was no longer safe to trust the exercises of public devotion to unpremeditated efforts: false prophets, and false

spirits, began to manifest themselves in the Christian assemblies, the monstrous doctrines of a semi-heathen gnosticism to be taught: the more needful was it that forms of prayer, embodying sound doctrine, should be used in public. Heresies one after another made their appearance; to meet the shifting aspects of error, creeds, more and more precise, were framed. Thus, to a great extent in an apostolical spirit, and with no small measure of wisdom, did the Church adapt her system, both of polity and of worship, to the inevitable changes which the lapse of time brought with it.

Such is the history of genuine Catholicism, Catholicism which we can recognise as Protestant. Neither to explain nor defend the rise and progress of ecclesiastical Christianity, have we need to have recourse to a supposed divine legislation, or to a covenanted connexion between the grace of the Holy Spirit and apostolical, or post-apostolical, forms of polity. When the first warmth of spiritual feeling, by which the primitive society of Christians was knit together as one man, began to subside, external organization naturally, and necessarily, stepped in to supply, as far could be, its place: forms, and organization, are the remedy which nature supplies for a diminution of the animating spirit: when effervescence ceases, chrystallization commences. And we cannot refuse our meed of praise to the great churchmen of the period of which we are speaking, for the skill with

which, on the whole, they availed themselves of this remedy.

When then did legitimate Catholicism become false, become unscriptural? When the Church began to confound effect with cause, means with end; to lose sight of the relative importance of what in her was inward, and what outward; to mistake the outward manifestations of the life within for the life itself: when she began to place her essential unity in visible uniformity, and to maintain that the extensions of polity and ritual which circumstances had led her to adopt possessed an independent, and inherent, value. But especially, when in order to establish these claims, pretensions were put forward which were not consistent with fact. For there was not only a danger lest the form should, instead of being a handmaid, usurp the place, of the Spirit; but the question soon arose, what authority was to be ascribed to the outward system of the Church? On what ground was its legitimacy to be rested, and, if need were, vindicated? At this point it was that the ambiguous language, the tampering with truth, to speak plainly, the pious frauds, characteristic of spurious Catholicism, began to make their appearance[1]. A divine origin was, without scruple, assigned to what could be clearly traced to natural causes. No distinction was made between what

[1] See Nitzsch Prot. Beant. Möhler's, p. 213.

is commanded, and what is merely recommended by precedent and example; between the Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself and the regulations of the Apostles; between the Apostolic appointments and those of the Church in subsequent times: the whole fabric was equally declared to be of divine appointment, and adhesion to it made the indispensable condition of salvation. The Papacy was instituted when Christ said to Peter, "On this rock I will build my Church[u]," or, "Feed my sheep[v];" from the very beginning of the Church the seven Orders of the Ministry existed[x]; to the Apostles and their successors in the priesthood was committed the power of consecrating the Eucharist, when Christ said, "Take, eat, this is my body," and, "Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood[y];" and so on

[u] Bellarm. De Rom. Pont. l. i. c. 10.

[v] Salvator noster Petrum universi fidelium generis caput et pastorem constituit cum illi oves suas pascendas verbis amplissimis commendavit, ut qui ei successisset, eandem plane totius Ecclesiæ regendæ et gubernandæ potestatem habere voluerit. Cat. Conc. Trid. p. i. c. x. §. 15.

[x] Ab ipso ecclesiæ initio sequentium ordinum nomina, atque uniuscujusque eorum propria ministeria, subdiaconi scilicet, acolyti, exorcistæ, lectoris, et ostiarii, in usu fuisse cognoscuntur. Conc. Trid. Sess. 23. c. 2. The two remaining Orders are, Diaconi and Sacerdotes. Ibid.

[y] Si quis dixerit illis verbis, Hoc facite in meam commemorationem, Christum non instituisse apostolos sacerdotos; aut non ordinasse, ut ipsi, aliique sacerdotes offerrent corpus et sanguinem suum; anathema sit. Conc. Trid. Sess. 22. Can. 2.

throughout. At a much earlier period, canons and liturgies, which, whatever their value in other respects, we know to be spurious, had been ascribed to the Apostles, to give them a greater authority[z]. Thus were Christians once more brought under the yoke and bondage of the Law; and as by the intervention of created mediators, the doctrine of Christ's sole and perfect priesthood

[z] Nitzsch (Prot. Beant. p. 209.) has remarked, very justly, that the *spurious* writings of the second and third centuries throughout favour the hierarchical spirit which had begun to prevail in the Church. Let the following, on the prerogatives of bishops, suffice as a specimen. Ὁ ἐπίσκοπος . . . μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν λατρείαις . . . δι' ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος ἀναγεννήσας ὑμᾶς εἰς υἱοθεσίαν . . . οὗτος ὑμῶν βασιλεὺς καὶ δυνάστης, οὗτος ὑμῶν ἐπίγειος θεὸς μετὰ θεόν. Apost. Const. l. ii. c. 66. Εἰ οὖν ἐῤῥέθη Μωυσῆς ὑπὸ Κυρίου θεὸς, καὶ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος εἰς θεὸν τετιμήσθω. Ibid. c. 30. Οὗτοι (ἐπισκόποι) παρὰ θεῷ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου ἐξουσίαν εἰλήφασιν ἐν τῷ δικάζειν τοὺς ἡμαρτηκότας καὶ καταδικάζειν εἰς θάνατον πυρὸς αἰωνίου, καὶ λύειν ἁμαρτιῶν τοὺς ἐπιστρέφοντας, καὶ ζωογονεῖν αὐτούς. Ibid. c. 33. Τοῖς γὰρ ἱερεῦσιν (i. e. the bishops) ἐπετράπη κρίνειν μόνοις· ὅτι εἴρηται αὐτοῖς, (namely, in Deut. i. 26. and xvi. 18.), Κρίμα δίκαιον κρίνετε. Ibid. c. 36. Τούτους ἄρχοντας ὑμῶν καὶ βασιλεῖς ἡγεῖσθαι νομίζετε, καὶ δασμοὺς ὡς βασιλεῦσι προσφέρετε . . . . ὅσῳ τοίνυν ψυχὴ σώματος κρείττων, τοσούτῳ ἱερωσύνη βασιλείας. Ibid. c. 34. Here, in short compass, bishops are described as mediators between God and man, and the representatives of God upon earth; as holding the keys of heaven and hell; as sole judges between Christians; and as superior to temporal monarchs. Apart from their matter, the *form* of these so-called Apostolical Constitutions is sufficient to stamp them as spurious. The Apostles are introduced as *enacting laws* for the Christian community in the minutest particulars; not, as in Scripture, furnishing merely *historical precedents*, on the more important points.

was obscured, so by the view taken of the external system of the Church, the doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit under our dispensation was lost sight of, and it was forgotten that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty[a]." It would not be correct to say that the whole Church fell into this error; for there were never wanting, from time to time, *protests*, however ineffectual, against this return to the principles of the elder economy.

The first occasions on which the principle of spurious Catholicism began to exhibit itself was when schisms arose in the early Church; and as nothing is more instructive than to contemplate error in its earlier stages, let me adduce an instance from the third century. We betake ourselves then to the see of Carthage under its great and good bishop, Cyprian; the true pastor of his flock, and martyr of Christ. Cyprian's episcopate had long been distracted by the factious proceedings of certain presbyters, who had opposed his elevation to the see, and who, after that event, continued to molest him. One of these, Novatus, among other acts of insubordination, ordained a certain Felicissimus deacon, without the knowledge or consent of his bishop. At length the party broke out into open schism, and appointed Fortunatus, one of their number, bishop of Carthage, in opposition to Cyprian. Now we seem to

[a] 2 Cor. iii. 17.

know how St. Paul would have treated this occurrence. He would have severely censured the contumacious presbyters for their schismatical spirit: he would have pointed out the sin and danger of such breaches of Christian union, and Apostolic order, and exhorted them to return to their obedience. Cyprian, however, advances much beyond this: he denounces the proceeding as a sacrilegious violation of a divine law. He arrogates to himself, and his order, without scruple, the prerogatives of the Jewish priesthood. "There can be but one altar," he writes, "and one bishop" (*sacerdos*); "whoever else collects, scatters. Whatever is set up by men contrary to the divine appointment is impious, sacrilegious[b]." "How can they escape the judgment of an avenging God, who heap reproaches not only on their brethren but upon the priests," (that is, the bishops,) "upon whom" (alluding to the law of Moses) "God was pleased to bestow such honour, that whosoever should refuse obedience to the priest for the time being should be put to death[c]." "Heresies spring . . . from not recollecting that in a Church there can be but one priest and one judge, who, for the time being, is the vicar of Christ." "Can that man think that he has communion with Christ, who separates himself from the communion of Christ's clergy and people? He wages war against the Church, against the

[b] Epist. 40. ad Pleb. [c] Epist. 55. ad Cornel.

ordinance of God . . . . not knowing that he who thus opposes himself to the divine ordinance shall experience the divine chastisement of his temerity. Thus it was that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, intruding themselves into the priests' office, in defiance of Moses and Aaron, received the just reward of their deed. Thus, too, king Uzziah, attempting, contrary to the divine law, to burn incense upon the altar, was struck with leprosy[d]." It is on this ground that Cyprian argues the question. And thus it was that great bishops, and pious men, when placed in these trying circumstances, yielded to the temptation to overstep the limits of truth; and, for the sake of a temporary advantage over inconvenient opposition, laid the foundations of the gigantic structure of the Papacy.

Let us, my brethren of the Ministry, bear in mind how liable we are to precisely the same danger; the danger of exceeding the limits of truth in the defence, or promotion, of what we believe to be important in doctrine or practice. It is much to be lamented that Christianity should not be able to present itself amongst us under the aspect of a visible, as well as a spiritual, unity; but this will not be remedied by exaggerated claims, or reasoning that will not bear scrutiny. Rather will the breach be widened by indiscreet statements of this kind. Let us take an instance

[d] De Unit. Eccles.

or two, such as we are likely to meet with in our parishes, or elsewhere. Considerable bodies of Christians, even whole Churches, differ from us on the subject of episcopacy, which we maintain, and they reject. Now would it not be more prudent to abstain from urging that this form of polity is essential to the being of a Church, and from a phrase which seems to be identical in import, episcopacy by divine right, when, after all, we can produce nothing more than Apostolical precedent? We think that in the persons of Timothy and Titus we have, at least, the rudiment of the episcopal office; but where is the *law*, emanating from either Christ or His Apostles, making this office of the essence of the Church, making it even of perpetual obligation? Is every Apostolical regulation, or precedent, to be deemed, at once, a divine law? Then why do we not anoint the sick with oil? Why do we not possess the order of deaconnesses? Why have we abandoned the kiss of charity? Why do we no longer think the prohibition against eating things strangled binding upon us[e]? And there is no need of such

[e] The writer would not be understood as placing the Apostolic Orders of the Ministry precisely on the same level with these appointments: but surely the instances are sufficient to shew that it has been too hastily assumed, that every regulation which can be proved to be Apostolic is of the nature of a divine law, and therefore absolutely binding. Yet many of our writers on Episcopacy argue in this manner. Thus good Bishop Hall indites a treatise which he calls

questionable assertions, for we have all we want to determine our practice, when we have shewn Episcopacy to be Apostolical, and, as we think experience has proved, salutary; and therefore *relatively*, binding.

We meet with others again who reject infant baptism, which we conceive we have excellent grounds for retaining. We wonder what objections can exist to a practice so natural, so consonant to the spirit of the Gospel, so likely to prove a blessing to all concerned in it. But it may be well not to urge particular texts of Scripture, commonly adduced in favour of our practice, beyond what they will fairly bear. Thus if we profess to find in the baptismal commission a command to baptize infants, because the words are, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them," and infants are a part of "nations[f];" the opponent

"Episcopacy by Divine Right;" but is, subsequently, compelled to acknowledge that all that he has proved is that it is Apostolical. "Let me beseech the reader to consider seriously of this difference, in the mistaking of which I have not a little suffered unjustly: and to remember how I have expressed it in my 'Remonstrance,' fetching the pedigree of Episcopacy from Apostolical (and therefore, in that sense, Divine) institution, and interpreting myself not to understand by 'divine right' any express law of God requiring it upon the absolute necessity of a Church, but an institution of Apostles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, warranting it where it is, and requiring it where it can be had." Defence of the Humble Remonstrance, Sect. 6. Would it not have been better to have abstained entirely from the phrase?

[f] "It is clear that the term 'nations' includes infants. There is not merely no prohibition against the practice, but

may, in the first place, reply, that our Lord is not speaking of the proper *subjects* of baptism, but simply of the duty of gathering in disciples from every part of the world; and secondly, he may call upon us, if we will insist upon the word "nations," to carry out our interpretation, and literally baptize whole nations, as the Jesuit missionaries are reported to have done. He may urge that we are not at liberty to "play fast and loose" with texts of Scripture; that is, make use of them so far as suits our purpose, but refuse to follow them out to inconvenient consequences. So, if we are arguing from the texts in which households are said to have been baptized, let us candidly acknowledge that there are as many in which the expression can hardly apply to others than adults; as when the households are said to have "believed," or to have "addicted" themselves "to the ministry of the saints[g]."

Once more: many of us think that the obligation to keep the Lord's day holy rests on a higher ground than that of its being a Christian festival, appointed by the Apostles to commemorate the resurrection of Christ[h]; but if to strengthen,

the command includes the class" (infants), "in consideration. Our baptist brethren ask for a command, and urge obedience. Here is a plain inclusive command. Let them obey the Lord of heaven and earth." Bickersteth, on Baptism, p. 118.

[g] Acts xvi. 34; xviii. 8, 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

[h] Whately, Essays on St. Paul, Essay V. See Dr. Hawkins's remarks on this subject, Bampton Lectures, p. 162.

as we think, our cause, we insist on the binding force of the fourth Commandment in the letter, we may be brought into a difficulty; for the objector may remind us, that the particular day is as much a part of the letter as the rest of the Commandment, and require us either to obey the whole literally, or to abandon the argument altogether.

The evil occasioned by a habit of consciously indulging in any thing like a pious fraud is by no means insignificant. In the first place, the mind that indulges this habit becomes at length incapable of discriminating between truth and falsehood: the sensitiveness of the balance becomes impaired: we can never with impunity tamper with the moral sense in this point. And, in the next place, the best cause may thereby be brought into discredit; for a weak argument, detected, is far worse than none. The opponent, easily overthrowing the defences erected by injudicious zeal, raises the shout of victory; the byestanders conclude that he does so with justice; whereas the real strength of the position may never have been assailed. There is not one of the points just mentioned,—episcopacy, infant baptism, and the moral obligation of devoting one day in seven to religious purposes,—but may be established on satisfactory grounds; not one but may be brought into jeopardy by attempting to push the argument beyond what the evidence justifies.

Let us then, my brethren, cultivate above all things a love of truth for truth's sake. Let no supposed interests of the Church, or of our party, lead us to deviate consciously one hair's-breadth from a scrupulous adherence to what the facts of the case warrant. Truth, outraged, will always avenge herself; and God is able to defend His own cause without our laying unhallowed hands on the ark. If we are really convinced that such and such arguments are valid, then, of course, we are at liberty to make use of them; but if there is a latent suspicion in the mind that they are unsound, that the premises do not warrant the conclusion, let us resist the temptation to frame, or repeat, them; for in this, as in other cases, the principle holds good, that "whatever is not of faith is sin[1]."

And thus I bring this discourse, and the series with which it is connected, to a close. In looking back upon the subjects that have successively engaged our thoughts,—the structure of the Theocracy; the Levitical appointments of priesthood and sacrifice with their corresponding facts under the Gospel; the prophetic revelation; the shape and direction which the inward religion of the Jew, under such a measure of spiritual influence as belonged to the elder economy, assumed; and the synagogue in its bearing on the visible establishment of Christianity in the world,—it is a

[1] Rom. xiv. 23.

source of gratification to perceive how large a proportion of them belongs to the common faith of all earnest Christians. It would be impossible, of course, to expect, in our divided state of theological sentiment, that the views put forward on some other points should commend themselves to every mind. We have been traversing difficult ground, and the relation of the Law to the Gospel cannot be discussed, to any instructive purpose, without touching on questions on which, unhappily, differences of opinion exist. I can truly say that my aim has been to avoid unnecessarily multiplying such topics; and only to insist on those which are of paramount importance, and which, according as they are decided, give a colour to our whole Theology. For openly expressing my convictions on these points I make no apology; for I cannot think it conducive either to the interests of Theological science, or, ultimately, of Christian union, that we should permit the dread of committing ourselves to any specific opinion to operate to confine us within the circle of whatever is most trite, and to produce in us a seeming, only a seeming, indifference to the progress of truth or error. Moreover, a Protestant Church recognises no infallible authority; and it is a consolation to any writer who is conscious of seeking truth, to know that what he advances must undergo the ordeal of an impartial criticism. What I have been permitted to advance I desire to submit to the judgment of my brethren,

desirous as I know they are of being guided in that judgment by Scripture: well assured that whatever shall be found agreeable to that sacred canon will abide, and may be of use; and that the "wood, hay, stubble," of human error will be swept away, even before the day arrives, when every man's work shall be tried by fire[k].

But controversy has, I trust, throughout occupied but a subordinate place in my regards. My chief objects have been, to attempt to confirm our faith in the divine origin of the Mosaic religion, both from its use at the time to those upon whom it was imposed, and from its prophetical character as introductory to the Gospel; and to lead my younger brethren to explore for themselves the rich treasures which lie hid in the Old Testament Scriptures. Should the observations that have been made be found promotive of these ends, my labour will not have been in vain.

"And now," brethren, "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified[l]."

[k] 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13. [l] Acts xx. 32.

APPENDIX.

A.

ON CIRCUMCISION CONSIDERED AS A SACRAMENT.

Page 56, line 7. *Nor does it appear that circumcision,* &c.] Whether circumcision is to be considered as a sacrament or not, depends on the manner in which the latter term is defined. By the word sacrament, the author means "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," (see Catechism of the Church of England,) and he has been unable to find any passage in the Old Testament in which circumcision is spoken of as, in this sense, a means of grace. Indeed the facts appear to warrant the more general statement, that the grace of the Holy Spirit formed no part of the expressed provisions of the Mosaic covenant. Circumcision was a symbolical ordinance, perpetually reminding the Jew of what he ought to be, but beyond this its efficacy does not seem to have extended. Mr. Fairbairn, in his valuable work on Typology, vol. i. p. 327, remarks, in reference to this subject, that "to be bound to do righteously without being entitled to look for grace corresponding, is simply to be placed under an intolerable yoke;" but is that not exactly the description which the Apostles give of the elder covenant? See Acts xv. 10. Heb. ii. 15. Gal. iv. 24. That spiritual aids were

vouchsafed under the Law we must believe; but no inconsiderable part of the "bondage" to which the pious Jew was subject, and which led him to long for a Saviour, must have consisted in the felt incongruity between the demands of the moral law, and the absence of a promise of sanctifying grace as part of the covenant which defined his privileges. The statement of Mr. Faber, (Prim. Reg. p. 94.) "that Circumcision, like Baptism, was the outward sign of the inward grace of regeneration," if it is to be understood of a *covenanted connexion* between circumcision and regeneration, is, surely, unguarded. It is true that circumcision was the *symbol* of inward purity, and, in that sense, a sign thereof; but such language as Mr. Faber uses is calculated to mislead, and is certainly not warranted by either the Old or the New Testament Scriptures. "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, &c." (Rom. ii. 28, 29.); such a passage as this by no means warrants the conclusions which Mr. Faber draws from it. It states that a true descendant of Abraham was an inheritor of Abraham's faith and piety, as well as connected with him by blood; but nothing respecting any covenanted connexion between the circumcision of the flesh and that of the heart.

In a looser sense indeed Circumcision may be considered as a sacrament. For Baptism too is a symbolical ordinance, perpetually reminding the Christian what his vocation is. Circumcision, moreover, was to the Jewish infant a seal, or formal confirmation, of the promises of God, first made to the Patriarch Abraham, and then to his seed; just as Baptism now seals to us the higher promises of the Evangelical covenant. It is thus that one of our Homilies speaks of it: "And so was Circumcision a

sacrament, which preached unto the outward senses the inward cutting away of the foreskin of the heart, and sealed and made sure in the hearts of the circumcised, the promise of God touching the promised seed that they looked for." Homily on Common Prayer and Sacraments.

The present writer, however, takes this occasion of acknowledging an alteration of view as regards the *place* which circumcision held in the ancient economy, and its consequent relation to baptism under the New. In his work on the Church (Appendix) the view was put forward, that circumcision was not so much the rite of admission to the Jewish covenant, as a means of continuance in it; a "condition subsequent," the neglect of which entailed the forfeiture of blessings previously enjoyed. He was misled by insisting too strongly on the language of the Law, which prescribes that the uncircumcised "soul shall be cut off from his people" (Gen. xvii. 14.), which seemed to imply, that the offender was already by his birth in possession of privileges of which for his contumacy he was to be deprived. The complete view seems to be this:—the (natural) birth of the Jew, which was the real ground of his privileges, answers to the new birth of the Christian in its inner or essential aspect; while circumcision, the rite by which the Jewish infant became a publicly acknowledged member of the Theocracy, corresponds to baptism, or the new birth in its external aspect, to which sacrament the same function, of visibly incorporating in the Church, now belongs. The argument then for infant baptism from circumcision holds good; though, no doubt, it is singular that, with the exception of one passage of doubtful import[a], (Col. ii. 11, 12.) no formal parallel

[a] It is strange that the Commentators who affirm that in this passage a parallel is drawn between circumcision and baptism, as visible ordinances,

should in the New Testament be found drawn between the two ordinances. But this may be because the analogy was so obvious as not to need mention. And perhaps the pædobaptist will more safely rest his cause, as far as Scripture is concerned, on general analogies of this kind than on texts more or less ambiguous, or on the scholastic notion of placing no bar (Is original sin no bar?). Such analogies are, 1. That of circumcision just mentioned; or rather circumcision in conjunction with, 2. The analogy between the Theocracy as a training school, and *local* Christian Churches which, to some extent, bear the same character. As circumcision marked the entrance of the Jewish infant on his school of training, so does baptism mark the entrance of the Christian infant on that course of discipline and instruction which, in the Church's expectation, will issue in a saving change of heart. 3. The circumstance, that in the Apostolic administration of baptism to adults, the sacrament was not deferred until visible signs of regeneration had been exhibited, but was administered at once, on an expression of desire for it. See the various instances in the Acts of the Apostles. (It may be questioned, in connexion with this head, whether the modern practice in missions of postponing baptism till after a lengthened period of probation and instruction is according to the Apostolic precedent.) 4. The *spirit* of such passages as Mark x. 13—16. 1 Cor. vii. 14.

should not have perceived the difficulty arising from the fact, that the circumcision of which St. Paul speaks is ἀχειροποιήτος, "made without hands," i. e. an inward, invisible, circumcision; in other words, sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Now between this and *outward* baptism, baptism administered "by hands," there can be no accurate comparison. To make the parallel a just one, we should be compelled to understand συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι (v. 12.) of the inward baptism of the Holy Ghost; which certainly is not St. Paul's meaning.

B.

ON THE IDEA OF CHRISTIAN ELECTION.

Page 70, line 15. *The Jewish election, and calling, and adoption,* &c.] "To what were they" (the Israelites) "chosen by their Almighty Ruler? Were they elected absolutely and infallibly to enter the promised land, and to triumph over their enemies, and to live in security, wealth, and enjoyment? Manifestly not. They were elected to the privilege of having these blessings placed *within their reach,* on condition of their obeying the law which God had given them." Whately, Essay on Election. This statement, surely, is not quite accurate. The original promise to Abraham was absolute, not conditional; "Unto thy seed will I give this land:" Gen. xii. 7. (compare xiii. 15; xvii. 8.): the promise was not that the land should be *offered* to the Israelites, but that they should inherit it. And accordingly they did eventually enter into Canaan. No delay in the fulfilment of the promise, no reluctance of the people to pursue their high destiny, sufficed to frustrate the purpose of God. Abraham's seed occupied the promised land. Had it been merely the "offer" to which they were elected, they never, as far as we can judge from their manner of spirit, would have fulfilled the Divine intention. The cutting off of a generation in the wilderness for disobedience cannot be urged as a proof that the promise was conditional; it was simply a *delaying* of the fulfilment: but a delay of more than 400 years had already interposed, and *many* generations of Abraham's descendants had never enjoyed the blessings of Canaan: yet this did not affect the quality of the promise, which remained an absolute one, though for the present the effect was suspended.

There seems to be in the whole of the Archbishop's reasoning some confusion between the grant of Canaan to Abraham's seed, and their *continued* possession of it. The grant was absolute; but the continued possession of it was conditional, that is, it was made to depend on obedience to the law. Prophecy foretold that the covenant would be broken, and the nation, in consequence, dispossessed of their inheritance (Deut. xxviii.); but the promise that they should be placed in possession, should be subjected to the probation under which they failed, was absolute.

The corresponding facts under the Gospel have been pointed out in the text. The elect of God, in the New Testament, are supposed not merely to have been placed *within reach* of salvation, but to have been inwardly moved to accept the Gospel offer; i. e. to be under the influence of the Spirit, and in the *enjoyment* of spiritual blessings. The "saints and faithful brethren in Christ" at Colosse (c. i. 2.) were supposed by the Apostle to correspond to their profession; which was, not to be saints merely in name or *professors* merely of the faith, but to be real saints and believers. They may not have been so in fact; for every local Church is necessarily a mixed body; but with the fact the Apostle had nothing to do: what they really were was known only to God, and St. Paul was compelled to take them at their profession. But in so doing he did not lower the meaning of these terms so as to comprehend the tares as well as the wheat; but, no account being made of the tares, the Church is designated according to the *idea;* that is, according to what it *ought* to be, and would be, if discipline were perfect. For it is only the imperfection of human discipline that prevents the separation of the tares inwardly as well as those outwardly: the former are no more really of the Church (the Church in its truth) than the

latter: and when Christ, who knows the heart, comes again, they will be severed from the body with which they had only an external conjunction, and no inward fellowship. The Commentators have not unfrequently perplexed a very simple matter, by not remembering that the mixed character of local Churches arises from the impossibility of applying discipline to more than the overt act: they would be pure if men could exercise discipline as Christ Himself would. "Of these promiscuously contained in the Church, such as are void of all saving grace while they live, and communicate with the rest of the Church, and when they pass out of this life, die in their sins, and remain under the eternal wrath of God; as they were not in their persons holy while they lived, so are they no way of the Church after their death" (no more, therefore, were they of it during their life, or only so externally), "neither as members of it, nor as contained within it. Through their own demerit they fall short of the glory unto which they were called, and being by death separated from the *external communion* of the Church, and having no true internal communion with the members and the head thereof, are totally and finally cut off from the Church of Christ." Pearson on Creed, Art. ix. "Not that there are two Churches of Christ; one, in which good and bad are mingled together; another in which there are good alone; one in which the saints are imperfectly holy; another in which they are perfectly such: but one and the same Church, in relation to different times," (he might have added, under different *aspects*, ἔξωθεν and ἔσωθεν,) "admitteth or not admitteth the permixtion of the wicked, or the imperfection of the ungodly." Ibid. "So likewise do the Apostles speak to all members of the Church as to elect and holy persons, unto whom all the privileges of Christianity do belong; although really

hypocrites and bad men 'do not belong to the Church' nor 'are concerned in its unity,' as St. Austin doth often teach." Barrow, Discourse on the Unity of the Church. "The invisible Church is ordinarily and regularly part of the visible, but yet that only part that is the true one; and the rest but by denomination of law, and in common speaking, are the Church, not in mystical union, not in proper relation to Christ; they are not the house of God, not the temple of the Holy Ghost, not the members of Christ; and no man can deny this. Hypocrites are not Christ's servants, and therefore not Christ's members, and therefore no part of the Church of God, but improperly and equivocally, as a dead man is a man; all which is perfectly summed up in those words of St. Austin, saying, 'that the body of Christ is not bipartitum,' it is not a double body; 'non enim revera Domini corpus est, quod cum illo non erit in æternum;'—all that are Christ's body shall reign with Christ for ever." Bp. Taylor, Dissuasive from Popery, p. ii. b. i. s. 1.

C.

ON THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF SACRIFICE.

Page 95, line 15. *The evidence seems, on the whole, in favour of the supposition, that this mode of worship commenced under divine sanction.*] The following is a summary of the arguments in favour of the divine origin of sacrifice.

1. However natural the simpler oblations of the fruits of the earth, as expressions of gratitude and dependence, may appear, it is difficult to perceive on what principles unaided reason could imagine that bloody sacrifices could be acceptable to the Creator. As Eucharistic offerings they are manifestly unsuitable: as symbolical repre-

sentations of the feeling of guilt on the part of the worshipper they might indeed have a natural use; and Mr. Davison (Prim. Sac. p. 22.) thus accounts for their introduction. But it seems doubtful whether, in the earliest instances on record, the sacrifice of Abel, for example, this feeling could have been associated with them, or at least could, in the first instance, have given rise to them. It has been remarked, (Lect. VI. p. 224.) that the spiritual progress of the race bears an analogy to that of the individual, and that we must not expect, and in fact do not find, in the first fathers of mankind, those deep convictions of sin which we discover in later times: even Cain needed a divine admonition from without to remind him of the sin slumbering at his door, which was soon to break forth in savage ferocity. It needed striking visitations from God; centuries of experience; and above all, the written law with the inspired expositions of it contained in prophecy; to produce adequate conceptions of human sinfulness: and it is not likely that, until this feeling existed in some considerable degree, so strong and marked an expression of it as the slaying of a victim, would spontaneously occur to the mind.

2. In its *piacular* character, as a rite of atonement and propitiation, it seems admitted that reason could never have surmised the efficacy of sacrifice. (Davison, Prim. Sac. p. 28.) If therefore the notions of the heathen on this point, by whom, as we know, universally, an expiatory power was attributed to animal sacrifice[b], proceeded not from the echoes of some primeval tradition, they owe their parentage to gross superstition. Yet that such a superstition should of itself have taken root in the various religions of the world, under circumstances

[b] Magee, Discourses on Atonement, Note 33.

which seem to preclude the idea of derivation the one from the other, seems hardly credible. The theory of some[c], that the sacrifices in question sprang from the gross anthropomorphism of uncultivated nations, by which the Gods were invested, not merely with human passions, but with animal appetites, and therefore the worshipper conceived himself bound to appear before them, not merely with gifts, as bribes, to procure their favour, but with gifts which imply the gratification of the lower appetites, as the flesh of slain animals,—is open to the objection that such extreme ignorance respecting the nature of Deity is hardly to be ascribed to the very early age in which the custom of sacrifice is found to have prevailed; according to Scripture soon after the fall: the Apostle, in the Epistle to the Romans, teaches us that the grosser forms of idolatry were the result of a gradual process of deterioration, of neglect to improve the measure of light still remaining to the fallen creature[d]. Nor can their human origin be satisfactorily explained on the notion of their being federal rites, implying, as eating and drinking did amongst men, friendship with the Deity, or reconciliation when that friendship was interrupted[e]; for in the earliest species of sacrifice, the burnt-offering, no part was reserved for the offerer's use, the whole being consumed on the altar; and moreover, on this hypothesis, it is difficult to account for the rise and prevalence of the revolting practice of human sacrifices.

3. Turning to the inspired records, we find, it is true, no positive determination of the point in dispute; but, on the other hand, nothing that militates against the supposition of the divine origin of sacrifice. If the

[c] Spencer, De Leg. Heb. l. iii. Diss. ii.

[d] Rom. i. 19—21.

[e] Sykes, Essay on Sacrifice. Mede, Works, b. ii. c. 7.

sacrifices of Abel and Noah cannot, as Mr. Davison contends, be proved to have been of expiatory character, those of Job seem really to approach to this quality (c. i. 5. xlii. 8.), and, as we know, in one instance of the latter they were offered by the command of God Himself. Moreover, the mode in which the subject of sacrifice is, in the law of Moses, introduced, is such as to impress on the mind the idea, that a well-known and familiar ordinance is now only about to receive greater distinctness of idea and additional details of ritual. It is to be observed, that sacrifice is not there instituted for the first time; but, apparently, on an existing rite are engrafted the various ceremonies which make up the Levitical system, and which distinguish it from the simpler worship of earlier times. See Levit. c. i.

Against these considerations, the mere fact that Scripture records no express institution of the rite seems hardly sufficient to weigh. Mr. Davison himself concludes his instructive treatise on sacrifice with the words, "I do not press a peremptory decision against its divine origin; because there may, in fact, have been reasons, undiscernible to us, why God may have chosen to withhold from after ages the knowledge of His institution of it." p. 168. In this state it is best to leave the controversy, which in no way affects the divine appointment of the *Mosaic* sacrifices, or their typical character. On the whole subject, see Outram, De Sac. Diss. i. c. 1. Magee, Notes 47—58. Davison, Prim. Sac. Warburton, D. L. b. ix. c. 2. Fairbairn, Typology, i. c. 4.

D.

ON THE VICARIOUS NATURE OF THE MOSAIC SACRIFICES.

Page 101, line 12. *The passage which I have read seems to assert as plainly as words can do the vicarious nature of these sacrifices,* &c.] The Socinian writers, and those inclined to Socinian views, have naturally endeavoured to disprove the quality here ascribed to the Mosaic sacrifices; for, this point gained, a step is made towards divesting the Christian atonement of one of its distinctive peculiarities. The arguments of Sykes and Taylor, the chief English writers on this side, will be found stated and refuted in Magee's Discourses on the Atonement, Note 38: they have been repeated, with the addition of some new ones, by Bähr, in his elaborate work, Symbolik des Mos. Cultus, vol. ii. p. 277—284. As it is not improbable that the revived controversy on the subject of the Atonement will, in its progress, extend itself from the New to the Old Testament, it may be not out of place to examine some of the objections which the last-mentioned, and very acute, writer urges against the commonly received view.

They may be arranged under the following heads: 1. The idea of *punishment* cannot belong to the Levitical sacrifices, because in them, as in all others of the ancient world, it was the blood, not the death, of the victim that atoned for sin. The law of Moses continually distinguishes between the slaying of the victim, and the sprinkling of the blood; and ascribes the atoning power, not to the former, but to the latter. Commenting on Levit. xvii. 11, Bähr says: "The first thing which strikes us in this passage, is the prominence given to the blood of the victim; it is not death that is spoken of as the means of atonement, but the blood; which latter was

evidently the principal thing in the sacrifice. Whilst the laying on of hands, the slaying of the victim, and the division of the carcase, were performed by the offerer, none but the priest could sprinkle the blood upon the altar." vol. ii. p. 200. "The same conclusion may be reached otherwise. Among all eastern nations, especially the Israelites, prayer was considered a sacrifice; after the destruction of the temple, prayer formally took the place of the Levitical offerings: but this could not have happened, had there not been an identity of idea between the two. Now what has prayer to do with the notion of punishment?" p. 279. 2. "According to the forensic view, expiation was effected by the vicarious death of the victim; whereby satisfaction was made to Divine justice, and the wrath of God appeased. But this is incompatible with the language of Scripture, which always, as has been remarked, speaks of the blood, and not of the death, as being the means of expiation; and, with the proper meaning of the word כָּפַר, which, signifying as it does 'to cover,' can never be applied to God, or to any quality in Him." p. 279. 3. "If the death of the victim is regarded as a (vicarious) punishment, it will follow that every sin for which a sacrifice was enjoined, must have deserved death; which no one can maintain. For sin-offerings were appointed only for ceremonial offences, inadvertently committed; not for moral." 4. "The forensic view confounds symbolical with real substitution: the victim is no longer a symbol of the offerer, but his substitute: a *permutatio personarum* is supposed to take place, by which the act of sacrifice becomes the formal execution of a righteous sentence, a mechanical, outward, act; and so loses its deep religious significance." p. 282. Bähr's own view is, that sacrifice is a surrender of the natural, sinful life to God, in order by union with God

to become partaker of His holiness. It possesses a twofold character, symbolical and sacramental: under the former aspect, it represents, by the victim offered, the giving up of the soul, the seat of life, to God; under the latter, it is an appointed means whereby union with God is effected; the blood covering, or removing, the sin which had prevented such union. The inference, of course, is, that the death of Christ, in like manner, is but an example (though the only true and perfect one) of self-sacrifice to God; a means whereby sinful man is attracted into union with the Divine Being; and which, though in some unexplained manner it cleanses from sin, does not, in any proper sense, involve the ideas of vicarious suffering, or of objective propitiation. p. 210—213.

1. To the first of these objections the reply is obvious:—"The life is in the blood;" and the presentation of the blood at the altar was nothing but the consummation of the sacrificial act by which the life of the victim was taken, instead of the life of the sinner. If this act was not complete without the sprinkling of the blood by the priest, no more was it without the death of the victim by which the blood was obtained. Neither of these two main constituent elements of the sacrifice should be exalted at the expense of the other; both were necessary to complete the idea. By the laying of his hand on the victim, the offerer identified it with himself so as to render it (symbolically) laden with sin; by the death which he then inflicted he confessed his guilt, exhibited what it deserved, and expiated it (symbolically). But something more was necessary to complete the transaction. Both Jehovah's acceptance of the expiation, and the application of it to the sinner, must be signified; and this took place when by the priest, the representative

of God, the blood, now no longer unholy, no longer charged with the sins which by death had been atoned for, was applied to the altar, the place where Jehovah and the people met together for the purpose of reconciliation, and which therefore was at once symbolical of the Divine Presence, and of those to whom that Presence was manifested[k]. "These ceremonies were so contrived, that to inflict the penalty on the animal was one thing, and to discharge it before God by a sacrificial rite was another. The former was done when the animal was deprived of life: the latter when the life of the animal was solemnly presented to God; which in this ritual service was not done till the blood, the vehicle of the life, was brought to His altar, or sprinkled towards His mercy seat." Outram, De Sac. Diss. i. c. xxi. s. 6. To perceive how essential to the sacrifice was the *death* of the victim; that it was just as essential as the sprinkling of the blood; we have but to consider what a difference it would have made had the blood been obtained from the animal without its undergoing death: we see at once that the import of the transaction would have been essentially altered. But Bähr seems to admit that the ideas of death and punishment are correlative; if therefore it is clear that the death of the victim was an essential element of the expiatory act, it is equally clear that that act involved the notion of punishment, the

[k] Hence the comparative frequency with which, in the New Testament, the *blood*, as compared with the *death*, of Christ is spoken of in connexion with the Christian life. By the *death* of Christ sin was expiated; by his "blood," as distinguished from his death, is meant the justifying power that flows from Him as a *risen*, and exalted, Saviour, the participation of His heavenly life. This to the *individual* is the commencement of salvation, and is appropriated by personal faith. Here the usual expression is not πίστις εἰς τὸν θάνατον, but πίστις ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι. Rom. iii. 25. "He died for our *sins*, but was raised again for our *justification*." Ibid. iv. 25.

punishment of sin, the infliction of the penalty of the law upon a substitute. And no ingenuity of reasoning can divest the transaction of this character. It was not blood merely, as blood, which covered sin; but blood obtained by the forfeited and sacrificed life of the victim, which represented Christ, the real bearer of the sins of the world, the real propitiation for our sins.

As to Bähr's argument from the presumed identity of prayer and sacrifice, it hardly deserves notice. Sacrifice, being, under one aspect, the dedication or surrender of the victim to God, is metaphorically applied to many things which come under that notion, such as praise or thanksgiving, and alms-giving. See Heb. xiii. 15, 16. And prayer may in this sense be termed a sacrifice. But to found any serious argument on such a use of the word as this, is but learned trifling. As to the practice of the Jews after the destruction of the temple, if they considered prayer a *substitute* for sacrifice, it was merely in the sense of its being the only religious service left them: just as the exiles in Babylon were compelled to substitute homiletic services for those of the temple. See Lecture VII.

Neither is there any weight in the remark which Bähr more than once makes, that, if sacrifice were the execution of the penalty of sin on a substitute (the victim), it is the priest, not the offerer, whom we should have expected to perform this act: "*God* would, in that case, have inflicted the punishment; that is, the priest acting in His name: so that slaying the victim, not sprinkling the blood, would have been the special function of the priest." p. 279. In the case of the true penitent, the condemning sentence of the law is anticipated; the sinner condemns himself. "Judge yourselves, that ye be not judged of the Lord." This sentiment was better

expressed by the offerer's himself slaying the victim, than if another had performed that office. Thereby he openly acknowledged the justice of the sentence which condemned him to die. Moreover, the typical correspondence would not have been so complete, had the priest slain the victim; for Christ as the Son of Man (not in His priestly office) was to offer *Himself;* "no man taketh it" (His life) "from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." John x. 18. Finally, throughout the act of atonement, Jehovah appears not as executing judgment but as shewing mercy; as accepting the sacrifice and applying it by means of the priest, to cleanse the sinner: another reason why the necessary deathstroke of justice should have been dealt by the offerer, and not by the priest.

2. But, secondly, it is urged that the "forensic" view, according to which "the wrath of God was appeased by the vicarious death of the victim," is incompatible with the facts, that the blood, not the death, is spoken of as the means of expiation, and with the proper meaning of the word כָּפַר. The first part of this objection, which relates to the blood, has been sufficiently considered: nor is it necessary to notice the second at any length, containing, as it does, only the often refuted, but perpetually repeated, charge, that the doctrine of the Atonement, as commonly received, represents God as implacable &c. But neither to the Mosaic sacrifices, nor to that of Christ, does such an idea belong. Towards sin the wrath of God, i. e. His displeasure, is, and cannot but be, manifested; but towards the sinner He has ever shown Himself a God of love, by providing means whereby, consistently with the divine attributes, forgiveness might be extended.

3. The third objection, that, if the forensic view were the true one, every sin for which a sacrifice was appointed must have been regarded as worthy of death; whereas it was only for ceremonial offences that atonements were permitted; is based upon erroneous assumptions. In the following note it will be shewn that the distinction between moral and ceremonial offences is hardly tenable; and that moral offences, not presumptuous, were susceptible of atonement not less than breaches of the ceremonial law. And as regards the penalty of sin, the law here made no distinctions: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them:" "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Deut. xxvii. 26. Ezek. xviii. 4.) We must take care, as Kurtz has remarked, (Das Mos. Opfer. p. 48.), to distinguish between the death here denounced against sin, and the civil penalty of death for murder, &c.: to no case of capital offences did the Mosaic atonements apply. But the death which is the penalty of sin signifies much more than the mere death of the body; and in interpreting the expressions of the *divine* law we cannot be guided by political analogies. Though it is true then that the offences expiated by sacrifice were never capital ones, this does not prove that they were not liable to the death which is the wages of sin, and as such fitly purged by the death of the victim, which, though an inadequate, was a *true*, representation of the penalty which the sinner had incurred.

It would have been more to Bähr's purpose to have adduced the cases of uncleanness occasioned by childbirth, contact with a dead body, and leprosy; as here there could confessedly be no moral guilt, and yet the uncleanness was removed by a sin-offering[1]. But it has

[1] Archbishop Magee (Note 38.) seems to suppose that the sacrifices

been observed (p. 89.) that these cases were all associated with sin, under one or another aspect, and therefore the remarks just made equally apply to them. But even if they did not, it cannot be argued that because *some* sacrifices were not vicarious, as not being offered for sin, they were equally destitute of this quality in cases in which moral guilt was involved.

Bähr, finally, has too hastily drawn the conclusion, that to constitute a punishment a vicarious one, it is necessary that it should be exactly the same as that which would have been inflicted on the offender. Outram's remarks on this point deserve notice. "It is objected that their" (the victims') "death could not be vicarious, because death was no where denounced in the law, even against the offenders themselves, on account of those kind of sins which were to be expiated by sacrifices. As if there could be no vicarious punishment, except it was of the same kind as that which would have fallen on the sinner himself: or as if the piacular victims could not stand in the place of the offerer, unless the law had in express terms denounced against the offerers themselves the punishment of death for those kinds of sins which were to be expiated by the death of victims. But neither of these suppositions is true, and one of them is contradictory to itself. In the first place, it makes no difference in vicarious punishment, whether the substitute suffers the same kind of punishment which awaited the sinner himself, or some other instead of it. Either, at the pleasure of him to whom the right of punishing belongs, may avail to avert punishment from the offender.

enjoined in these cases were not vicarious, because the usual ceremonies (laying on of the hand &c.) are not mentioned. But since they are expressly called "sin-offerings," (see Levit. xii. 6. xiv. 19. Numb. xix. 9.) it is not likely that these ceremonies were actually omitted.

Hence it appears that to sustain *vicarious punishment*, and to suffer *vicarious death*, are not precisely the same, and that one may be inflicted without the other. In the next place, it is not true that piacular victims could not stand in the place of the offerers, unless the law in express terms denounced against the offerers themselves the punishment of death for those kinds of sins which were to be expiated by those victims. Such a denunciation would have left no room at all for expiation. For every punishment expressly denounced by the law against offenders, the law would have required to be inflicted upon them; no sacrifice or expiation could have averted it. It is evident from this consideration that the punishment, whatever it was, which was averted by sacrifices, could not be denounced in the law, against the offerers or offenders themselves, without contradicting the commands for the oblation of victims; and that it was omitted to be denounced for this very reason, because the law made provision for its being averted by sacrifice." Diss. i. c. xxi. s. 9.

4. But, lastly, the sacrifice thus loses its symbolical meaning, and becomes a mere mechanical *permutatio personarum*. By no means. The radical defect of Bähr's own view is, that he makes the victim exclusively, or principally, the symbol of the offerer; whereas, properly, it was the symbol, or representative of Christ, and only secondarily so of the offerer. The train of ideas is as follows: Christ was the true vicarious victim upon which the sin of the world was laid: before this effectual sacrifice was offered, symbolical ones, substitutes for it, were, under the Mosaic law, appointed: in these latter, therefore, the victim *primarily* represented Christ; but because Christ was to identify Himself with man and to occupy man's place, it *mediately* represented the offerer. Thus

the transaction, from first to last, was purely symbolical. There was a symbolical translation of the offerer's sin; a symbolical expiation by death; a symbolical application of that expiation by the sprinkling of the blood: the only thing that was real was the *effect* of the whole, viz. the forgiveness, or covering, of the sin; which, as has been more than once remarked, resulted, not from any inherent efficacy in the legal sacrifices, but from their (in the Divine mind) typical connexion with the one great Sacrifice which they prefigured. And what deeper religious sentiments could be expressed than those of self-condemnation, of penitence, and of faith in the divine promise? Certainly, these are as strongly characteristic of true religion as the surrender of the life to God, in which Bähr would make the whole import of sacrifice to consist.

Such are the objections to the judicial, or vicarious, theory of the Mosaic sacrifices which the most distinguished advocate of the opposite view has been able to muster. For Bähr himself abandons the argument drawn from the permission, in certain cases, to substitute offerings of flour for animal sacrifice. Levit. v. 11. He rightly reminds those who lay stress on this circumstance, that this permission was granted only when the offerer was so poor that he could not procure even a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons; and that we must not argue from the nature of an occasional substitute to that of the thing itself, in its proper form. ii. p. 281. How insufficient the objections are upon which he does insist has, it is hoped, been made evident; and when in such hands the argument fails, it is not likely to be revived with more success by others.

Si Pergama dextrâ
Defendi potuere, etiam hac defensa fuissent.

But the task undertaken was not to be accomplished; at least by any unprejudiced reader of the Old Testament.

It may be asked, however, how the vicarious theory can be adjusted to the case of the peace, or thank, offerings, in which the ceremonies of laying on the hand, slaying, and sprinkling the blood, are exactly the same as in the other sacrifices, and yet with which it is difficult to connect the ideas of sin and punishment. Bähr has not failed to make use of this circumstance, vol. ii. p. 218. But, as is remarked at p. 98 of the Lectures, to *all* the Mosaic sacrifices without exception, the ideas of sin and expiation belong, and therefore the ideas of substitution and satisfaction. Let us hear Bähr himself explaining the peace-offerings. "The sprinkling of the blood" (in the peace-offerings) "does not differ from that in the burnt or trespass-offering; and this is deserving of attention, for, according to the common view of the nature and object of the peace-offerings, expiation, which is denoted by this act, does not belong to them. But if we ascribe an expiatory power to the trespass-offering, (and this we must do,) it is impossible to deny it to the peace-offerings, since the atoning-ceremony is in the latter exactly similar. We can the less ignore this property, or assign to it a subordinate place, because Scripture makes it particularly prominent, when it enjoins that the priest *who sprinkleth the blood* shall have the shoulder and breast of the victim. Levit. vii. 14, 33. We must here, as well as in other cases, regard this act (the sprinkling of the blood) as the essence of the sacrifice. The idea of atonement is, in fact, inseparable from the Mosaic sacrifices in general, and the peace-offerings would have been no sacrifices, had they not possessed an atoning power: whatever special object these offerings may have had, it must have ultimately

rested on the general ground of expiation. According to the principles of the Mosaic religion, man can not enter into any relation or connexion with God, of whatever kind, without atonement. As regards the particular notion of the peace-offerings, it is by no means incompatible with that of expiation. For the word שֶׁלֶם, in its proper meaning, signifies the filling up of what is imperfect, the payment of a debt; and the offerer, apart from his general need of atonement, is here so circumstanced as particularly to need this process of compensation. The connexion of the peace-offerings with sin and atonement is, curious to say, especially visible in that species of them which seems least to admit those ideas, the thanksgiving-offering. The word תּוֹדָה (thanksgiving) comes from הוֹדָה, which signifies to confess one's sin before God; and the connexion of the two meanings arises from Hebrew religious associations. The knowledge of sin is only attained in the light of God's holiness; whilst, therefore, man confesses his sin before God, he also confesses that God is holy; and since the holiness of God was, under the Mosaic revelation, His chief revealed attribute, the confession of sin, and the confession of God's attributes, or Name, because one and the same thing. But to confess Him, as the Holy One, is likewise to praise Him. With the sacrifices of thanksgiving therefore the Israelite necessarily connected the confession of sin; and so proceeded to the idea of atonement: which idea, consequently, was as much a part of this species of sacrifice as of any other." vol. ii. 379, 380. In this instructive passage Bähr relieves his opponents from the labour of replying to his former remark respecting the thank-offerings: he has shewn, most conclusively, that in these, no less than in the sin-offerings, the ideas of sin, of the penalty of sin, and of atonement, were

expressed, and therefore that *all* the Mosaic sacrifices were expiatory and vicarious.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Jowett, in his Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles, vol. ii. p. 479, should have been unable to see more in either "Heathen or Jewish sacrifices" than "the dim, vague, rude, (may we not say) almost barbarous, expression of that want in human nature which has received satisfaction in Him only. Men are afraid of something; they wish to give away something; they feel themselves bound by something; the fear is done away, the gift offered, the obligation fulfilled in Christ." But the profoundest feelings of human nature, on the subject of religion, are not to be thus summarily disposed of. And if *Jewish*, not less than Heathen, sacrifices are but a "rude, almost barbarous," expression of man's spiritual wants, in what light are we to regard the volume in which those sacrifices are described as having been appointed by God Himself? The God of the Old Testament must be different from that of the New, if He could have not only sanctioned, but expressly enjoined, ceremonies of such a character. It is no wonder that, on such an hypothesis, the conclusion arrived at is, that "Heathen and Jewish sacrifices rather shew us what the sacrifice of Christ was not, than what it was;" that is, in other words, that the Old Testament, at least the ceremonial law, is not only of no use to illustrate the import of Christ's death, but is calculated positively to mislead us on that subject. It seems difficult to maintain the divine origin of a professedly preparatory dispensation, when it does any thing but *prepare* the way for its successor.

E.

ON THE EXTENT OF THE MOSAIC ATONEMENTS.

Page 106, line 6. *This opinion is strongly opposed by others*, &c.] The chief writer on this side of the question is Mr. Davison, who, in his work on Prophecy, and especially in that on Primitive Sacrifice, denies to the Mosaic sacrifices the power of atoning for moral offences, or of effecting more than the restoration of the offender to Theocratical privileges. See Discourses on Prophecy, p. 147. and Prim. Sac. pp. 86—93. In this he is followed by Bähr (Symbolik des Mos. Cult. ii. 386), but from a different motive: Mr. Davison urges the point in order to prove that sacrifice before the Law was not expiatory; Bähr that he may gain, as he conceives, an additional argument against the forensic, or vicarious, view of sacrifice in general, both the Mosaic and the Christian. The arguments of neither writer seem quite satisfactory.

As regards the range of offences to which the Mosaic atonements extended, Mr. Davison presents us with the following fourfold division: "1. Bodily impurity. 2. Ceremonial offences. 3. Sins of ignorance and inadvertency, or offences 'unwittingly done.' 4. Certain specified cases of Moral transgression, knowingly committed, in favour of which an exception from the general severity of the Law was admitted, and an atonement ordained." Prim. Sac. p. 90. This arrangement is obviously inaccurate; for ceremonial offences might be "unwittingly done," or through "ignorance," and indeed *must* have been of this character to entitle them to the benefit of atonement. A better division would be: 1. Bodily impurity. 2. Sins of ignorance; sins committed בִּשְׁגָגָה, that is, inadvertently, or without de-

liberate design. Under the latter head Mr. Davison refuses to admit more than what he calls purely ceremonial offences. "As to the reality of this failure and deficiency, we have it demonstrated by the letter of the Law itself, which takes up the ritual, and passes almost untouched the moral, transgression." Prim. Sac. p. 86. Against this statement it may be remarked;

1. That the distinction between moral and ceremonial offences is more apparent than real. Even if (which however seems a gratuitous supposition) the cases alluded to in Levit. iv. were those of breaches of the ceremonial law merely, yet they must have partaken of a moral character, inasmuch as they are supposed to proceed from "inadvertence," or carelessness, which, in however slight a degree, is culpable. It is not pretended that the Israelite *could* not have exactly complied with the precepts of the ritual: the ignorance was not absolutely unavoidable: obedience, however difficult, was possible: hence the offences were censurable; and, though they fell not under the cognizance of human tribunals, they were treated as "sins," and as needing a sacrifice of atonement. The very word applied to them (חַטָּאת) shews this. Thus was the absolute holiness of God impressed on the mind of the Jew. What in the eye of man would be considered as but innocent inadvertencies, became in the eye of God sins, culpable, though pardonable. Most strongly is this exemplified in the case of unpremeditated manslaughter. Accidental manslaughter by the slipping of the head of an axe from the handle (Deut. xix. 5.) is by no human law a crime. We should be disposed rather to pity than to blame the agent: yet it entailed a species of banishment, to last perhaps for many years. (Deut. xix. 5.) The lesson intended to be taught was, that thoughtlessness, want of circum-

spection, the unavoidable frailties, as we say, of human nature, are of the nature of sin, and need expiation. There does not, then, appear to be ground for the distinction between ceremonial offences, or sins of ignorance, and moral transgressions; all, though in different degrees, came under the latter category.

Indeed under the Mosaic religion this distinction is not recognised. As ceremonial offences, even those inadvertently committed, partook, in the eye of the divine law, of a moral character; so moral transgressions, properly so called, were also theocratical ones, or breaches of the covenant between God and Israel. This proceeded from the peculiar structure of the Theocracy, as explained in the first Lecture. Hence it might be anticipated that moral as well as ceremonial offences, provided they were not of the kind termed "presumptuous," would be included in those for which atonements were appointed.

2. That the text of Scripture by no means warrants this limitation to ceremonial offences. "If a soul shall sin against any of the commandments of the Lord." Levit. iv. 2. "This shall be a statute unto you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins once a year." Levit. xvi. 34. It seems difficult to conceive expressions more general than these. What reason can there be to confine them to any one species of offences? It is probable, indeed, that by far the greater number of sins coming under the class mentioned in Levit. iv. must have been ceremonial in character: but there is not a word throughout the chapter which limits the atonement to such offences. In Levit. vi. 1—6. trespass-offerings, which it is impossible to distinguish clearly from sin-offerings, are appointed for certain sins purely moral,—such as false swearing, and detaining the property of another obtained by violence, or deceit,—pro-

vided the offender confessed his crime, and repaired the damage; and in Levit. xix., the same indulgence is granted to the violation of a Hebrew bondmaid betrothed to an husband. To argue, as Mr. Davison does, that these were *exceptions* to the general rule, seems something like begging the question. Rather may it be contended, with Outram, that out of the mass of moral offences capable of expiation, this class was, after restitution made, and sacrifice offered, selected for a special assurance of pardon, in order to encourage those offenders whose guilt could not be proved by witnesses, (for such seems the case contemplated in Levit. vi.) to make of their own accord compensation; it being obviously for the general interest of the nation that they should do so. Outram De Sac. i. c. 13. This explanation, indeed, does not apply to the case of violating a bondmaid; which therefore stands alone, though, doubtless, it rested on some good reason not now discoverable.

Bähr's chief argument is derived from the graduated scale of the sin-offerings; which differed according to the rank of the offender, whether it were the high-priest, the whole congregation, a ruler, or one of the common people (Levit. iv.): whence the inference is, "that since the theocratical position of the offenders determined the sacrifice, the offences expiated were theocratical, (i. e. ceremonial,) and not moral." Bähr, ii. 387. But this appears by no means decisive of the question. The circumstance admits of easy explanation. The same offence is usually considered more or less culpable, according to the position of the offender; e. g. corruption in a judge is thought more criminal than in a private person. All sins being, under the legal economy, theocratical, in estimating them, and proportioning the atonement for each, account was naturally taken of the rank and

dignity of the transgressor. But this determines nothing respecting the *kind* of sins susceptible of atonement.

Nor does it seem conclusive to urge that the sin and trespass offerings, being new appointments, peculiar to the law of Moses, imply new offences, that is, the ceremonial ones occasioned by the Law; for moral offences always existed: to the former therefore alone these offerings applied. (Dr. Hawkins, Sermon on Mosaic Atonements, Discourses &c. p. 178.) For, in the first place, though expiatory sacrifice became, under the Law, a divine appointment, and took special forms, yet the most ancient of all sacrifices, the burnt-offering, contained, we cannot doubt, an expiatory element[f]; so that the sin and trespass offerings were not, in this respect, absolutely new ordinances; rather they may be considered as *special forms* of the patriarchal burnt-offering. And, secondly, the eternal moral law (a point to be always borne in mind) assumed, under the Theocracy, a new shape: it became theocratical in character, or part of the civil law of the commonwealth: and to it, in *its new form*, the new appointments of the sin and trespass offerings, and those of the great day of atonement, were adapted.

Mr. Davison further argues from the case of David, "who well understood all the resources of the Law, to which he had given his meditation day and night, but yet could find in them no atoning sacrifice for his sin. (Psalm li.)" Prim. Sac. p. 86. It surely escaped him, at the time, that David's sins, adultery and murder, were "presumptuous" ones, for which, as all admit, no atonements were provided. The absence of such a provision was indeed a chasm in the legal appointments;

[f] This is here assumed. Mr. Davison argues to the contrary; but, as it should seem, on insufficient grounds. Prim. Sac. p. 30. See Dr. Hawkins's Sermon, p. 189.

but we are speaking now, not of sins of this class, but of those of inadvertency.

He also adduces St. Paul's testimony; that the law "was the ministration of death[g]." "But how," he asks, "could it be the ministration of death, if its penal sanctions had, opposed to them, any great antagonist charter of remedial expiation?" Prim. Sac. p. 93. But St. Paul takes care to specify what "law" it is of which he is speaking. It is the law, "written and engraven on stones," the Decalogue, of which he says it was "the ministration of death;" as indeed, taken by itself, it must have been, and must ever be, to sinful man. But the *ceremonial law* bore a friendly aspect towards the sinner: it spoke, however imperfectly, of mercy, of atonement, of pardon, of reconciliation; and in no sense could it be called the "ministration of death" to the Israelites. It was to them the substitute for what Christ's sacrifice is to us.

But, however plausible these reasonings may be, St. Paul's testimony, it is urged, is specific and direct against the view in behalf of which they are employed. "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses[h]." And again, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins[i]." (Compare Heb. x. 4; ix. 15.) There can be no doubt that, throughout the New Testament, the strongest contrast is drawn between the Mosaic atonements and that of Christ, as regard the efficacy of each: but the question is, do the statements of the inspired writers compel us to the

[g] 2 Cor. iii. 7. [h] Acts xiii. 39. [i] Heb. x. 11.

conclusion, that moral offences were not comprised in the charter of the former? Is there no other way in which they can be explained, so as to permit the language of the Old Testament to retain its natural sense? The law of Moses could not, St. Paul says, justify; but its application to moral offences and its power of justification are, surely, not necessarily one and the same thing. And Mr. Davison's reasoning seems to rest entirely on the assumption that they are. (Prim. Sac. p. 87.) The Mosaic atonements could not justify, because they could not obliterate the guilt of sin: they were effective so far as to cover it, to procure a suspension of the penalty, but the law, and the conscience, still remained unsatisfied. Since the victim was but a symbol, the expiation effected was but symbolical, not real; there was an inherent impossibility, that the "blood of bulls and goats" should "take away sins." Yet to the symbolical atonement God attached a real efficacy, the restoration of theocratical privileges at least, if nothing more: and here to the worshipper must have been the mystery, and the difficulty: to be solved only on the supposition of a future perfect atonement, of which the present appointments were the substitutes and representatives. Inasmuch, however, as the typical reference was not made known to the Jew, (especially at first,) the conscience could never have been purged by these sacrifices: their efficacy in the sight of God is explained, when we recollect that He had ever Christ's work in view; but the Jew, who could not connect the symbol with the reality, must have walked in comparative darkness. He was told that certain sacrifices would avail to cleanse him from his sins (Levit. xvi. 16, 20.): *how* or *why* they did so, he knew not. These considerations seem sufficient to account for St. Paul's language respecting the inferiority

of the legal atonements. In themselves they were worthless; from their connexion, in the Divine mind, with the Christian sacrifice they possessed an atoning power, but only a limited one; and to the worshipper they must have been dark ordinances, save so far as the typical reference became surmised. Moreover, for one whole class of sins, those committed בְּיָד רָמָה, or presumptuously, the law provided no atonement; whereas "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from *all* sin[k]."

Some minor questions yet remain, to which it will be sufficient to draw attention, without entering into any lengthened discussion. Supposing that moral as well as ceremonial offences were entitled to the benefit of the Mosaic atonements, or rather that all the offences contemplated were, in different degree, moral, we may ask, what effect would the expiatory sacrifice have in procuring a release from any temporal penalties that may have been annexed to the offence committed? According to the view above propounded, not merely were sinful thoughts and words, or breaches of the ceremonial law, in either case arising from inadvertency, capable of atonement; but the same merciful provision extended to such overt crimes as were not punishable by death; as, for example, to theft, not committed בְּיָד רָמָה, but under the influence of sudden temptation, or to fornication. (Deut. xxii. 28, 29.) Though these cases do not come under those for which a trespass-offering was permitted (Levit. vi. 1—6.), we must suppose, that after the civil penalty was undergone, the transgressor was, by the general propitiation of the day of atonement, restored to theocratical privileges. But not, surely, until after the civil penalty was undergone. The point is here noticed, because Archbishop Magee (Note 37.) seems to suppose that, in all

[k] 1 John i. 7.

such offences as admitted of expiation, a release from the temporal penalty followed from the atonement. This however would have been inconsistent with public security. If a thief, however unpremeditated the act might be, could escape the civil penalty of his crime by offering a sacrifice, society could not have held together. In such cases then, we must suppose that the civil penalty was first suffered, and then expiation by sacrifice permitted. And very likely, deliberate theft, which was one of the crimes to which (for whatever reason) the penalty of death was not attached, (see Exod. xxii. 1—4.), became, in like manner, after the appointed restitution had been made, expiable by sacrifice.

With respect to the *extent of the forgiveness* which was the effect of these sacrifices (to which the " cleansing" in Levit. xvi. seems equivalent), the *expressed* benefit could, of course, only be temporal in character, since the sanctions of the law itself were but temporal. Sin, of whatever kind, being a breach of the civil law of the Jewish state, excluded the transgressor from theocratical privileges, i. e. the blessings connected with the Mosaic covenant; " forgiveness" could therefore by the Jew only be understood to signify a reinstatement in these privileges. But this does not preclude us from supposing that a further efficacy, *unrevealed*, may have attached to the Mosaic atonements; and that, by virtue of their being substitutes for the one great sacrifice of the Christian covenant, they may have availed, when offered in penitence and faith, to avert the eternal consequences of sin. In this, as in other instances, the law may have implied more than it expressed, or promised.

If the view thus taken be correct, the whole matter will stand as follows:

1. " Presumptuous" sins were punished by death,

without the benefit of atonement. But by sins of this kind those seem to have been meant, which, whether ceremonial or not, implied a spirit of open rebellion against Jehovah, and contempt for the law. "The soul that sinneth presumptuously .... the same *reproacheth the Lord*." Numb. xv. 30. The example that follows is that of the man who gathered sticks on the sabbath day.

2. All others were susceptible of expiation by sacrifice: but a distinction arises betweeen those that involved civil injury to others, and those which did not, as, for example, careless breaches of the ceremonial law. In the former case we must suppose that the civil penalty (restitution &c.) was first undergone, and then the theocratical standing restored by sacrifice: in the latter, inasmuch as there was no civil injury to be repaired, the sacrifice alone sufficed to effect this object.

3. What particular sacrifices did for the individual offerer, the general expiations of the great day of atonement effected for the whole people of Israel.

F.

ON THE IMPOSITION OF HANDS IN CONNEXION WITH THE CEREMONY OF THE SCAPE-GOAT.

Page 103, line 1. *Because sins are expressly said to have been thus transferred to the live goat on the day of atonement*, &c.] The ceremonial of the day of general expiation harmonises so completely with the judicial theory of sacrifice, that it has always presented a difficulty to the maintainers of the opposite view. Some, like Sykes and Taylor, arguing, that the scape-goat was *polluted* by the transfer of sin (Levit. xvi. 21.), on which account it was not offered to Jehovah, but sent away into the wilderness, infer, that "it was not to transfer sins upon the sacrifice that hands were laid upon the head of the victim; as men would not offer unto God what they knew to be polluted." (Sykes, Essay, p. 37.) Others, like Bähr, (ii. p. 683.) have insisted on the circumstance, that it was on the *live* goat, and not on the slain, that the sins are said to have been laid; from which they argue, that there was no connexion between the transfer of sin by the imposition of hands and atonement by means of vicarious sacrifice.

In replying to the arguments of Sykes and Taylor, Archbishop Magee (No. 39.) appears somewhat embarrassed, from his assumption that the common view respecting the pollution of the scape-goat is the correct one. But Bähr himself has furnished the most conclusive refutation of this opinion. He has shewn that all the sin-offerings, so far from being polluted, were holy; that it was on this account that, in ordinary cases, they were to be eaten by the priests, while, in the extraordinary ones of the victims whose blood was brought into the

sanctuary, which it would not have been proper for the priests thus to consume, (see Lecture III. p. 102.), they were to be burnt without the camp, lest they should see corruption. With respect to the sacrifices of the day of atonement in particular, he remarks: "If the inferior class of private sin-offerings was so far from being unclean, that the priests could eat thereof, the burning of the higher class without the camp cannot be explained by the supposition of their being polluted, but on other grounds. Had their pollution through the imputation of sin been the cause of it, the other sin-offerings must likewise have been burned, since in them the transfer of sin and the supposed consequent uncleanness was exactly the same. It does not follow that because every thing unclean was to be removed from the camp, every thing removed from it was therefore unclean. Moreover, unclean things were to be carried to an unclean place, as in the case of the wood of a house infected with leprosy (Lev. xiv. 44, 45.); but the sin-offerings were to be burnt in a clean place, whence it seems to follow that they were themselves clean. Nothing can be more contrary to the Mosaic doctrine of sacrifice than the supposition, that those offerings, the effect of which was expiation in its highest degree, were especially unclean." (ii. p. 397.) What Bähr remarks of the victims sacrificed is true also of the scape-goat, for the latter must not be separated from its fellow; that part of the ritual with which it was connected was but the complement of the ceremony of expiation begun by the slaying of the goat on which the "Lord's lot" had fallen. Since the atonement effected on this day was the most perfect and general of all those permitted or enjoined in the Law, the symbolism by which it was expressed was fuller than that employed on ordinary occasions; and while in the common sin-offerings

the sprinkling of the blood, by which the covering of sin was betokened, sufficed, here the additional idea of the complete removal of sin was introduced, the scape-goat bearing the sins of the people upon him into a land not inhabited. "Had it been possible to recall the slain goat to life again, and then to charge upon him the sins atoned for, for the purpose of removal, the same end would have been attained: since this was impossible, another goat, as it were, an *alter ego*, in all respects identified with the first, performs this office." (Kurtz, Das Mos. Opf. p. 297.) That the use of two goats arose from the physical impossibility of representing by one victim the completeness of the atonement effected, and not from any essential difference between them, as if the one were polluted and the other not, is evident, 1. From the language of Scripture, which speaks of them as together forming one sin-offering, (Levit. xvi. 5.) 2. From the circumstance that it was to be determined by lot which goat was to be slain; from which it may be inferred, that, previously to the choice thus made, both were indifferently destined to form part of one and the same ceremony. But especially, because, 3. The living goat is said (Levit. xvi. 10.) to have had atonement made for it[a]; that is, to have had communicated to it the expiation effected by the shedding of the blood of the first goat; so that it now occupied exactly the same place as the first would have done had it been restored to life. This last circumstance is entirely inconsistent with the supposition of this goat's

[a] Our translation, "to make atonement *with* him," is undoubtedly incorrect. The atonement was made by the death of the first goat; the second goat received the benefit of this atonement, or was symbolically cleansed, like the tabernacle and the altar, in order to fit him to bear away the sins, now expiated, into the wilderness. לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו never signifies to make atonement *with* a victim. No doubt the blood of the slain goat was sprinkled on the living one.

having been *polluted* by the transfer of the people's sins. (See Bähr, ii. 678—684.) Nor does the fact of those who burnt the sacrifices outside the camp, and who led the goat into the wilderness, being obliged to wash before they were again admitted, (Levit. xvi. 26, 28.) invalidate the above reasoning. "For this washing was not in consequence of the pollution of the sacrifices, or of the scape-goat; otherwise the high priest, who especially had to do with them, must have become unclean: but in consequence of the possibility of uncleanness having been contracted, unconsciously, during absence from the camp; in which case readmission without ceremonial purification could not take place. The high priest indeed likewise washed after the completion of the ceremony; but this was merely in accordance with the law which prescribed that the priests should never perform their sacred functions without purification by water. Exod. xxx. 19." Bähr, ii. 684.

Sykes's argument, therefore, that the living goat was not sacrificed because it was polluted by the imputation of sin, and therefore the goat that was sacrificed must not be supposed to have had sins transferred to it, falls to the ground, with the erroneous assumption on which it rests. But while we welcome Bähr as a fellow-combatant on this point, we cannot permit him to draw the conclusions which he does, in support of his own peculiar views. The circumstance that the priests were commanded to eat the flesh of the sin-offerings he triumphantly insists on, as decisive against the "judicial" view. "If, as is supposed, transgression was imputed to the victim, which, consequently, became unclean and liable to death, how could the priests, to whom contact with unclean things was especially interdicted, have been commanded to eat of its flesh? The law says, 'All the

males among the children of Israel shall eat of it: it is most holy,' (Levit. vi. 17, 18.); but according to the judicial view, we should have expected exactly the opposite, 'No one, least of all the priests, shall eat thereof, for it is polluted.'" (Vol. ii. p. 396.) But this reasoning is not satisfactory. In maintaining the vicarious nature of the Mosaic sacrifices we do not contend, or admit, that, *after* death suffered, the carcase of the victim was unclean. The broken law demanded the life; but the life is in the blood: by the shedding of the blood therefore the sin was expiated, and both the blood shed, and the flesh of the victim, became holy. To the former a quality was imparted to cover sin; the latter became fit to be presented to Jehovah, on whose altar the fat and kidneys were burnt (Levit. v. 10.), and therefore fit to be the food of the priests. But Bähr further urges, that if the judicial view were the true one, the sins would have been found transferred not to the living, but to the slain, goat. "The whole ceremony decisively contradicts this view. On the first goat the sins are not laid, and yet it is slain; they are laid on the second, and yet it is sent away alive." (Vol. ii. p. 683.) But the learned writer here too hastily assumes what should have been proved: he assumes that the imposition of hands did not take place in the case of the slain goat. That it did so however we cannot doubt, though Scripture does not mention the fact; because this ceremony was enjoined in all cases of piacular sacrifice. (Levit. iv.) There was no occasion specially to mention a rite which it would be sufficiently understood must have been observed. But Archbishop Magee has pointed out, that in the description of the sacrifices offered by Hezekiah, the circumstance omitted in Levit. xvi. is more than implied; "They brought forth the he-goats for the

sin-offering, before the king and the congregation, and they laid their hands upon them, and the priests killed them." (2 Chron. xxix. 23.) Magee, No. 39. Hands then were laid on both goats: on that about to be slain, in order to transfer to it the unexpiated sins of the people; on the living animal, in order that the sins now expiated might be borne away out of sight.

With respect to the ceremony itself of the imposition of hands, its import seems so plain, that it is a matter of surprise how it can ever have been questioned. But the ingenuity of learned writers has found means of explaining it so as to avoid the dreaded idea of the imputation of sin. Bähr's view is, that nothing more was intended by it than the surrender of the victim to Jehovah; it was a significant act, by which the owner of the animal parted with his property, and devoted it to holy uses. "The hand, the member with which one holds and gives, is laid by the offerer on the victim, to denote that it is his own; and on its head, to signify that he devotes it to death." (Vol. ii. p. 341.) He cites the cases of the blasphemer (Levit. xxiv. 14.); of Susanna (ver. 34.); and of the Levites (Numb. viii. 10.), in all of which this rite was used, as proofs that it had no connexion with the transfer of sins. But they do not establish his position; properly understood, they rather make against it. The general meaning of the imposition of hands in Scripture is clear; it signifies the transfer, or passage, of a virtue, property, or quality, from one person to another. Thus it was used in blessing (Gen. xlviii. 14.); in communicating spiritual gifts (Deut. xxxiv. 9. Acts viii. 17.); and in miraculous healing (Mark vi. 5. Acts ix. 17.). In its special applications, this its fundamental idea must never be lost sight of; and in the two former of the above cases, as in that of sacrifice,

the only interpretation which, consistently with this idea, we can adopt is, the imputation of sin. The congregation laid their hands on the blasphemer, and the witnesses on Susanna, in order, in both cases, to discharge upon the guilty individual the burden of sin which, unexpiated, rested upon the whole body. And if in the third instance, that of the Levites, we cannot connect with the transaction the notion of sin, yet that of substitution is plainly expressed: the Levites were taken instead of the firstborn of Israel; and to symbolize this substitution, the people laid their hands upon them, and they became the Lord's property.

Finally, Jewish tradition, if it is to be allowed any weight, is entirely in favour of the vicarious import of the ceremony under consideration. Let the following testimonies from Outram suffice: "The comment of R. Levi Ben Gerson on these words, 'And Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the bullock,' is, 'This was the imposition of their both hands, and was designed to indicate, that their sins were removed from themselves, and transferred to this animal.' The same author remarks on another passage: 'The imposition of hands was a tacit declaration on the part of every offerer, that he removed his sins from himself, and transferred them to that animal.' To the same purpose is the language of Isaac Ben Arama: 'Whenever any one sins through ignorance, or even with knowledge, he transfers his sins from himself, and lays them upon the head of his victim. And this is the design of those confessions,—I have sinned, I have been rebellious, I have done perversely; as appears from the confessions of the high priest pronounced over the bullock sacrificed as his sin-offering on the day of atonement.' Among other observations respecting the bullock sacrificed as a sin-

offering for the whole congregation, Abarbinel says, 'After the confession, the sins of the children of Israel rested upon him.' Whence we may infer it to have been the opinion of this Rabbi, that those sins, of which solemn confession was made over a piacular victim, devolved upon the victim immediately on that confession." De Sac. D. i. c. 22. s. 5.

G.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTATION.

Page 141, line 28. —*that doctrine of imputation, both of sin and of righteousness.*] That the vicarious efficacy of Christ's sacrifice depends upon the representative character of Christ Himself is obvious: He cannot be said to have died for, or instead of, man, if He did not stand towards man in the relation of a federal Head, whose acts were to have an influence on the condition of the whole race, or at least of that portion of it which constitutes His Church. That in Scripture Adam and Christ stand opposed to each other in this capacity admits not of doubt: it appears from the appellations, "first man" and "second man," by which St. Paul designates each respectively (1 Cor. xv. 47.); and from the parallel, but contrary, effects which flow from connexion with each. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin . . . much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many;" "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the

obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 12—19. The plain and obvious sense of these passages is, that as the race was implicated in the sin of the first man and its consequences, so it is affected by the obedience, active and passive, of the second man; the sin of Adam, and the righteousness of Christ, being the sources, respectively, of death and life to the world. More than this the Apostle does not expressly assert in this passage; but even this is enough to establish the Augustinian view, *in its general features*, as contrasted with that which bears the name of Pelagius.

The Pelagian theory regards mankind as a collection of individuals, isolated and independent, or affecting each other only in the way of teaching or example: not as an organized whole, propagating itself. Each man comes on the stage of life, free to stand or to fall; and, though placed in a disadvantageous position, owing to the prevalence of evil in the world, which is a matter of fact and cannot be denied, not otherwise incapacitated from working out his salvation. According to Augustin, the human race forms a whole, the separate members of which are connected together by their common relation to one stock, in the qualities of which they all participate; as the leaves and branches of a tree form an organized system, and spring from one root. Which of the two views is most accordant with the mind of St. Paul can hardly be a matter of doubt. Let it be granted, that he does not explicitly affirm that the *guilt* of Adam's transgression is imputed to his posterity; let it be admitted, that the Vulgate rendering of ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον, *in quo omnes peccaverunt*, will not stand the test of criticism; it is enough that St. Paul recognises a causal, and not a mere typical, connexion between Adam's transgression and the general corruption of mankind,

a federal relation between our first parent and his posterity. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." It may be remarked, however, that it is not easy to reconcile the Apostle's expressions, or the facts of the case, with the supposition that the corruption of nature which we derive from Adam does not, in God's sight, partake of the nature of guilt. Death is the punishment of sin; where then death reigns, as St. Paul argues, there must be sin, sin meriting punishment: but "death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;" that is, against a positive law. From the principle which he lays down in ver. 13, that "sin is not imputed where there is no law," it *might* be supposed that the death which reigned over adults in the interval between Adam and Moses was the penalty, not of actual, but of original, sin; but even if this interpretation be rejected, the case of infants still remains, who cannot have committed actual sin, and yet are liable to death. On what grounds are we to explain this fact? If we suppose that the race, irrespectively of the sins of individuals, inherits guilt, as well as corruption of nature, in consequence of the fall, it is accounted for; otherwise it remains a mystery. And this is a case in which we must make our choice between difficulties. If it is "at variance with our first notions of the moral nature of God[a]" to suppose that He regards as guilty those who have never committed actual sin, it is equally, we should think, to us unaccountable that such beings should suffer pain, sickness, and death. But since this latter is *a fact*, by no means more intelligible than the *doctrine* of imputation, we are reduced to the conclusion that our reasonings against St. Paul's doctrine are fallacious, if we could

[a] Jowett, vol. ii. p. 167.

only discover where the fallacy lies; and that if we knew all, we should perceive that it is not irreconcileable with God's attributes that the human race should so far be identified with its progenitor as to derive from him both corruption and guilt. Meanwhile it may be observed, that this notion is by no means contradictory to natural reason. The imputation of guilt may be compared to the effect of our ancient laws of attainder, by which a whole family was, for the crime of its ancestors, subjected to various civil disqualifications; i. e. was treated as guilty, though innocent of the offence in question, or of any other: the derivation of an inherent "fault or corruption" of nature has its analogy in the transmission of diseases, and even moral dispositions, from father to son. It may be observed too, that the difficulty is not alleviated by interpreting the Apostle's expressions to signify merely temporal death. Let it be granted, that no one will be punished *everlastingly*, save for his own personal sins; yet temporal death is assuredly of the nature of a punishment, and we know that beings innocent of actual sin (infants) suffer it; through the sin of Adam the race has suffered the forfeiture of immortality: it is obvious that the objections and difficulties which may be urged against Augustin's doctrine of the penal consequences of original sin in another world, apply equally to this more limited view. The *apparent* injustice is the same under either supposition.

The imputation of Christ's righteousness is the correlative of that of Adam's sin; and by the latter, according to St. Paul, we are to explain the former. As through Adam's transgression we bring into the world a corrupt nature, and so, antecedently to actual sin, lie under a spiritual attainder; so by new birth we become interested in a righteousness not originally wrought out by

us, which is laid to our account, in order to our justification. The language of the New Testament is so constructed, as irresistibly to impress upon the mind the representative and vicarious character of our blessed Lord. It is through union with Him that Christians enjoy their distinctive privileges: in Him they die to sin; in Him they rise to a new life; with Him they sit down in the heavenly places: and the imputation of His righteousness is but a particular application of the more comprehensive fact, that believers are one with Him. It is true that the expression "righteousness of Christ imputed to us" does not occur in Scripture, the usual phrase being, "faith is counted for righteousness," (Rom. iv. 9.); but since faith cannot possess any inherent excellence to justify, and derives its virtue solely from its object, (otherwise justification by faith would, contrary to the Apostle's doctrine, be justification by works under another form,) we arrive, in explaining this phrase, ultimately at the meritorious work of Christ, active as well as passive, as the true source of justification; or, (to adopt the exact language of Scripture,) Christ "is made unto us righteousness" in the same sense in which He "was made sin for us." 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21.

As against Rome the doctrine of imputed righteousness expresses the truth, that the formal cause of our justification is not any thing in ourselves; and in this connexion it is sufficient to insist on the idea of imputation as distinguished from an inherent quality, without further more definite statements. The *forensic* view of justification, which Rome has always assailed, is no other than that set forth in Art. XI., that "we are *counted* righteous," &c. There is a tendency, however, in some Protestant theologians to confine the idea of justification to the pardon of sin; a type of doctrine at variance with the confessions of

the Reformed Churches, and inadequate to the statements of Scripture on this subject. The tendency is to make the *death* of Christ, by which sin was expiated, the sole object of the Christian's contemplation; and proportionably to obscure the great doctrine of union, not with a dead, but with a living Saviour, by virtue of which we obtain not only the obliteration of sin, but a share in the rewards of His perfect obedience, a participation in the glory which He now at the right hand of God enjoys. Not that, *in fact*, we can separate the two elements of justification, forgiveness and the imputation of righteousness; they ever go together, and form one act of God: but mentally they are separable; and (if the analogy of human tribunals is to be held applicable to the divine procedure) we recognise the difference between the mere pardon of a criminal, and his restoration to the favour of his sovereign. As regards the charge of Antinomian tendencies, supposed to be connected with the doctrine, it can be founded only on the supposition that imputed is separable from inherent righteousness,—the work of Christ *for* us, appropriated by faith, from the work of Christ *in* us, the effect of His Spirit,—which, however, both Scripture and experience shew to be impossible.

H.

On Rom. viii. 16.

Page 213, line 8. *The rather jejune interpretations of such passages as the foregoing, which may be found in the works of some of our divines,* &c.] The reign of Charles the First was, as is well known, marked by a great change in the current theology of the Church; a change which speedily made itself felt on the subject of spiritual influences. Arminianism, as distinguished from Calvinism,

has ever exhibited a Pelagian tendency, and an inclination to reduce the work of the Spirit to the lowest possible, consistent with any adequate interpretation of Scripture. To this may be added, the reaction from Puritanism, which took place after the Restoration, and which produced a general distaste towards such topics. The usual method was to interpret the expressions of our Lord or of St. Paul, in reference to the spiritual influences proper to the Gospel, of the miraculous gifts of the Apostolic age, which were to cease with the occasion which required their presence. As a specimen, we may take the following remarks of Stebbing, or rather Clagett, on our passage: "This testimony of the Spirit is the public testimony which was given by the Spirit that Christians are the children of God. For it is said in the foregoing verse that they had received the Spirit of adoption, which being opposed to the spirit of bondage, shews the Apostle's meaning to be, that the Christians were the children of the promise, and ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας, of the free woman, as he expresseth it, Gal. iv. 28. Whereas the Jews, i. e. those of them that were under the Law, answered to the condition of Ishmael, who was ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης, the son of the bond-woman, to whom there was no promise of an inheritance. Now that none but Christians were the sons of God, and heirs of the promised inheritance, was that which was testified against the Jews, by the miracles and supernatural gifts of the Apostles and primitive believers; i. e. by the testimony of the Spirit. And thus this text is far from intending any immediate testimony of the Holy Ghost to our minds that we are God's children." (Discourse touching the Operations of the Spirit.) According to this view, the witness of the Spirit with the Christian's spirit is something altogether external to him; a mere testimony from

God, by miracles, that Christianity was now to take the place of Judaism. Nearly to the same effect is Hammond's paraphrase of the passage. By Warburton the indwelling of the Spirit in believers is reduced to "His constant abode and supreme illumination in the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament" (Doctrine of Grace, b. i. c. 5.); a theory which, first, I believe, broached by Stillingfleet, unhappily has received the sanction of the pious Bishop Heber in his Bampton Lectures. Yet Barrow had spoken far more scripturally: "By participation of this immortal seed" (of the Spirit), "we are engrafted into alliance with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren of Christ, heirs of Paradise; for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, that Spirit which constituteth us the sons of God, qualifying us to be so, by dispositions resembling God, and filial affections towards Him; certifying us that we are so, and causing us by a free instinct to cry, Abba Father." (Whit-Sunday Sermon.) So Pearson: "It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God towards us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance. . . . . As therefore we are born again by the Spirit, and receive from Him our regeneration, so we are also assured by the same Spirit of our adoption." (On the Creed, Art. VIII.) Several modern commentators have understood the witness of the Spirit in our passage to mean, the conviction of his being a child of God, which arises in the Christian's mind from an observation of the fruits of faith which he has been enabled to bring forth; a reflex act of the Christian's own mind: but this interpretation is neither suitable to the context, nor does it express the plain meaning of the Apostle's words.

I.

ON THE INVISIBLE CHURCH.

Page 256, line 10. *The one true, or, as Protestants call it, the Invisible Church*, &c.] The difficulty which the idea of an Invisible Church presents to many persons arises from their understanding the distinction between it and the visible Church as an absolute, and not, as it really is, a relative one: a mistake which has perhaps been occasioned by the language of some of our divines, who speak of two Churches, a visible and an invisible, or a Church within a Church. Thus Barrow: "For because this visible Church doth enfold the other (as one mass doth contain the good ore and base alloy, &c.)" Discourse concerning the Unity of the Church.

It is really one and the same Church that is the object of consideration, but which is regarded under different aspects, or from different points of view, according as we fix our attention on its external notes, and its visible condition in this world, or its true essential being. Distinctio illa, says Gerhard, (Aphor. 19.) non introducit duas veluti distinctas ecclesias, et diversos cætus, sed cætum vocatorum κατ' ἄλλον καὶ ἄλλον ὑπολήψεως τρόπον, videlicet ἔξωθεν καὶ ἔσωθεν, considerat. Or, as he explains it more fully in his Loci, de Eccles. c. vii.; Ecclesia pro toto vocatorum cætu accepta dupliciter consideratur, ἔσωθεν scilicet atque ἔξωθεν, id est, respectu *internæ* et *externæ* societatis. Interna ecclesiæ societas consistit in unitate fidei salvificæ, spei et caritatis, qua Christo cogniti et reliquis mystici corporis membris vere pii sunt conjuncti. Externa ecclesiæ societas consistit in professione fidei et usu sacramentorum, cui disciplinæ ecclesiasticæ exercitium potest addi. Visibilis est ecclesia respectu societatis

externæ. Quinam enim ad externam ecclesiæ societatem pertineant, oculis hominum est obvium; sed quinam ad internam ecclesiæ societatem pertineant, non item, quia fides et spiritualis novitas quæ est proprium et internum veræ ecclesiæ decus, infirmitatibus carnis obtecta latet. To the same effect Field, on the Church, c. x. "Hence it cometh that we say there is a visible and invisible Church; not meaning to make two distinct Churches, as our adversaries falsely and maliciously charge us, though the form of words may seem to insinuate some such thing, but to distinguish the divers considerations of the same Church: which, though it be visible in respect of the profession of supernatural verities revealed in Christ, use of holy sacraments, order of ministry, and due obedience yielded thereunto, and they discernible that do communicate therein; yet in respect of those most precious effects, and happy benefits of saving grace, wherein only the elect do communicate, it is invisible; and they that in so happy, gracious, and desirable things, have communion among themselves, are not discernible from others to whom this fellowship is denied, but are known only to God. That Nathanael was an Israelite, all men knew; that he was a true Israelite, in whom was no guile, Christ only knew."

The Church is, according to the idea, or primarily, (proprie, principaliter dicta, Melanchthon, Apol. Conf. Aug. c. iv.), a communion of saints; not merely of professing, but of real saints. In the presence of Christ's Spirit, uniting the members to the Head and to each other, lies its true being, and differentia. Every definition of the Church which makes the possession of the Holy Spirit a separable accident, and places its essence in external notes or polity, is defective; and, so far, verges towards the doctrine of Rome, according to which

every one, however inwardly corrupt, and destitute of saving faith, who participates outwardly in the sacraments and is in communion with the Bishop of Rome, is a true member of the Church, and therefore a member of Christ. See Bellarmin. de Eccles. Mil. l. iii. c. 2. To define the Church as the community of the baptized, or of those who *profess* faith in Christ, is obviously this doctrine under another form; for according to it the true being of the Church lies, not in that which is to the eye of man invisible, the indwelling of the Spirit, but in that which is external; so that mere nominal Christians, and true believers, are equally members of Christ; and to the visible Church the privileges which Scripture assigns to the body of Christ directly belong. The attribute of sanctity becomes a mere external consecration to God, like that of the vessels of the tabernacle; and that of unity is reduced to *sameness* of Church polity, or profession of the same faith and administration of the same sacraments.

It is against this low conception of the Church, which ignores its essential characteristic, the presence of the Spirit as an operative principle, that the Confessions of the Reformed Churches mean to protest, when they describe the true Church as invisible. What they mean is, that that which makes us members of Christ, and of Christ's body, viz. saving faith, is invisible, for God alone can see the heart. "Though the men be visible, yet that quality and excellence by which they are constituted Christ's members, and are distinguished from mere professors and outsides of Christians, this, I say, is not visible. All that really and heartily serve Christ 'in abdito' do profess to do so:—the invisible Church ordinarily and regularly is part of the visible, but yet that part only that is the true one; and the rest but by

denomination of law, and in common speaking, are the Church." Bishop Taylor, Dissuasive from Popery, part ii. b. i. c. 1. "That Church of Christ, which we properly term His body mystical, can be but one: neither can that one be sensibly discerned by any man, inasmuch as the parts thereof are now in heaven already with Christ; and the rest that are on earth, albeit their natural persons be visible, we do not discern under this property, whereby they are truly and infallibly of that body. Whatsoever we read in Scripture concerning the endless love and saving mercy which God sheweth toward His Church, the only proper subject thereof is this Church. Concerning this flock it is that our Lord and Saviour hath promised, 'I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish; nor shall any pluck them out of my hand.' They who are of this society have such marks and notes of distinction from all others as are not object unto our sense; only unto God, who seeth their hearts, and understandeth all their secret cogitations, unto him they are clear and manifest." Hooker, E. P. b. iii. c. 1. 2.

What is it that compels us to make the distinction alluded to? The fact, that the true Church, the one body of Christ, can, under this dispensation, manifest itself *visibly* only under the form of particular, local, Churches, such as that of Rome, or Ephesus; and, under the latter form, is affected with heterogeneous admixtures, which do not properly belong to it. Many, as our Lord's parables of the tares and the fish teach us, are members of local Christian societies, who have no saving union with Christ, and therefore do not belong to the unity of the true Church. Otherwise, secret unbelievers, provided they be baptized, would be members of Christ; a profanation of the term which it is impossible to prevent the doctrine of Rome from ultimately arriving at. Local

Churches can never, owing to the imperfection of human discipline, perfectly correspond to the idea, or in other words to what they *profess* to be, communities of saints; and therefore the aggregate of such Churches, or visible Christendom, is never exactly identical with the true Church. What then is the bond of connexion between the two? The means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments; which, administered by visible Churches as such, are the instruments whereby the body of Christ is replenished with members, and built up in the faith. And therefore we never can, in this life, separate between the Church as visible, and the Church as invisible: extra vocatorum cætum non sunt quærendi electi: the true members of Christ are always found members also of local Churches, of which they form a larger or a smaller proportion according to circumstances; that is, according as tribulation or persecution for the word's sake thins the ranks of the mere nominal Christians, or prosperity attracts them in greater numbers. The great error of sectarian movements has commonly been, the forgetting that the true Church cannot, at present, separate itself from the impure elements with which it is in external conjunction, and form one distinct body of real saints. This, we know, will take place "at the manifestation of the sons of God," when Christ, the unseen Head, shall Himself appear; but not until then.

The distinction between the visible and the invisible Church is absolutely necessary to the due understanding of the statements of Scripture on this subject. "To the latter of these (that is, to the catholic society of true believers and faithful servants of Christ, diffused through all ages, dispersed through all countries, whereof part doth sojourn on earth, part doth reside in heaven, part is not yet extant; but all whereof is described in the

register of divine pre-ordination, and shall be re-collected at the resurrection of the just;) I say, to this Church, especially, all the glorious titles and excellent privileges attributed to the Church in holy Scripture do agree. This is 'the body of Christ;'—'the house of God;'—'the city of God;'—that one 'holy nation and peculiar people,'—the spiritual Israel;—the 'one flock, under one Shepherd.'" Barrow, Discourse &c. Let us take the attribute of Unity. Unless we adopt the Romish theory of the visible unity of the Church under one *visible* head, the only unity of which local Churches, as such, are susceptible is *sameness* of polity, faith, and sacraments; but in no proper sense are they one society, which implies a central government: they are independent communities, founded on the same principles, and having the same objects, and so far only are one; one as the monarchies of Europe are one. But it is certain that Scripture speaks of a higher unity than this; of a unity under one "Head from whom the whole body" is "fitly joined together, and compacted[o];" of Christians being "a building fitly framed together[p];" of Christ being the Vine and Christians the branches[q]: "As the body is one and hath many members, so also is Christ[r]," i. e. Christ and His Church: of an organic unity, in short, or that which results from the connexion of the members with the Head and with each other. Romanists, by their theory of the Papacy, do really succeed in producing something like this: rejecting that theory, we shall find ourselves somewhat embarrassed in endeavouring to discover any thing corresponding to such a unity, unless we understand the expressions alluded to of the one true Church; which, in fact, is always one society, or *respublica*, under its unseen Head, governed and animated by one

[o] Eph. iv. 15, 16. [p] Eph. ii. 21. [q] John xv. 1. [r] 1 Cor. xii. 12.

Spirit; but is not as yet manifested in this its organic unity. And this is, indeed, their true application.

On this point, as on some others, Protestantism can draw its proper nutriment from Augustin's writings. "Cum igitur boni et mali dent et accipiant Baptismi sacramentum, *nec regenerati spiritualiter in corpus et membra Christi coædificentur nisi boni;* profecto in bonis est illa Ecclesia cui dicitur, 'Sicut lilium in medio spinarum, ita proxima mea in medio filiarum.'" De Unit. Eccles. s. 60. "Propter malam pollutamque conscientiam damnati a Christo jam in corpore Christi non sunt quod est ecclesia; *quoniam non potest Christus habere membra damnata.*" Cont. Cres. l. ii. s. 26. Compare Cont. Epist. Par. l. iii. s. 10.; de Bap. Cont. Don. l. iv. s. 4.

In connexion with the subject discussed in the text, the change of meaning which the words "temple," "sacrifices," and the like, undergo under the Christian dispensation, it may be a practical question, whether the service frequently used in the consecrating of Churches be not calculated, where not explained, to mislead. The idea that God takes up His local habitation in a Christian place of worship as He did in the Jewish temple, is not unlikely to be fostered by the employment of such psalms as the xxivth. ("Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and the King of Glory shall come in,") and such lessons as Solomon's dedication of the temple. But "the house of God, under the Gospel dispensation, is no house made with hands .... its materials are the sons and daughters of the human family[s]." Wherever two or three are gathered in the name of Christ; be it in the upper chamber, or on the sea-shore; there is the temple of God, for Christ is among them. Reverence for the sacred building is very desirable; but let not the attempt

[s] Bishop M'Ilvaine's Sermon on the Church of Christ.

be made to secure it by a "pious fraud," or the tacit recognition of principles which involve serious doctrinal error. Or, at least, if passages from the Old Testament Scriptures are used on such occasions, let the people be instructed in the difference between the two dispensations as regards this point.

THE END.

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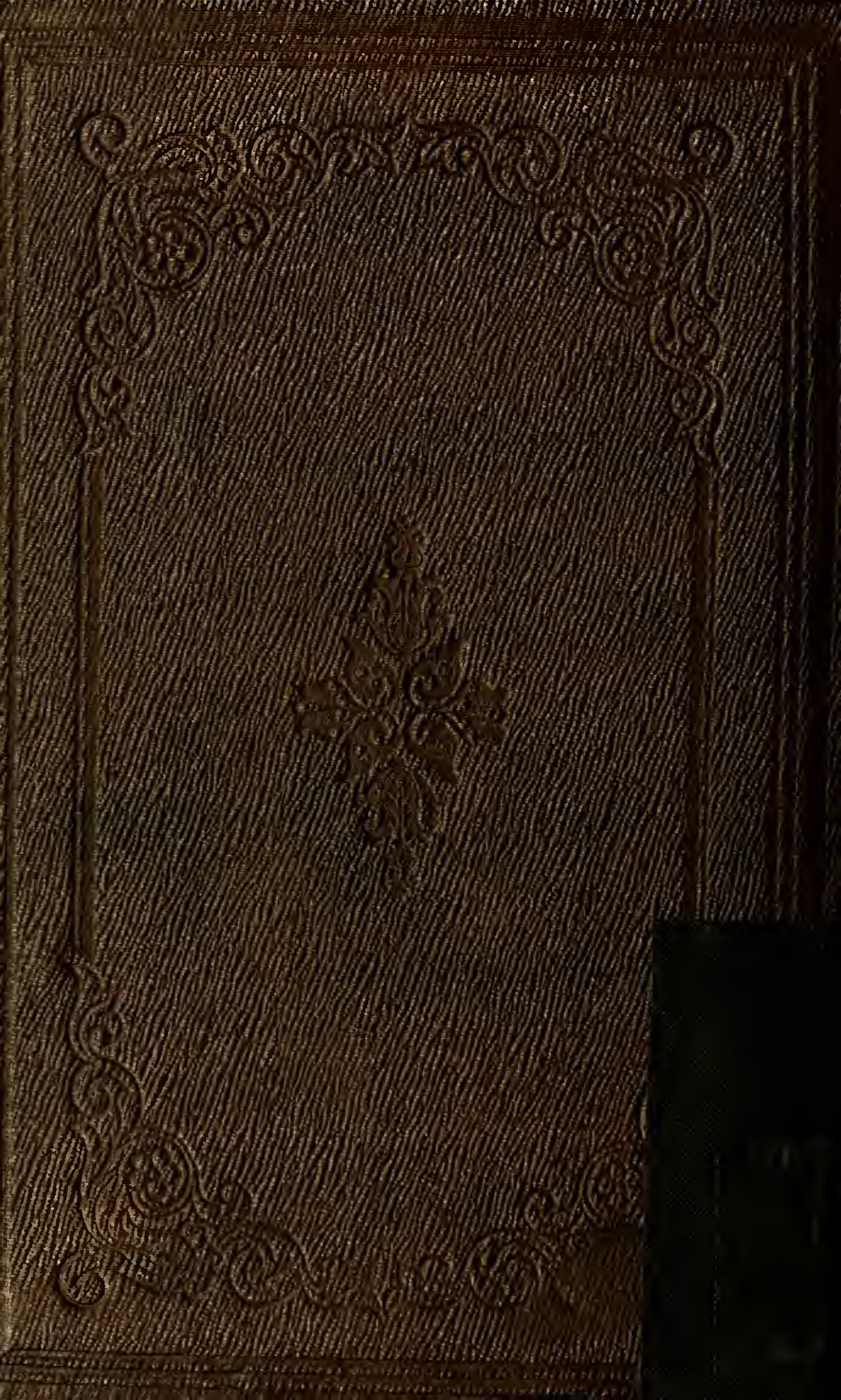
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